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ABSTRACT

This manual is designed to provide materials to improve the employment and academic skills of adults. Five chapters are included. Each chapter begins with problem-solving exercises that encourage students to reflect on the topic and recall their past experiences. These exercises provide a framework for the students to understand the readings that follow. The readings develop the topic initiated in the opening exercise and allow the student to reflect on the topic from a variety of perspectives. Chapter 1 begins by providing historical vignettes focused on women workers in the United States from 1900 to 1950. Chapter 2 involves an exploration of students' employment interests and goals. Chapter 3 acquaints the student with the job market and encourages exploration of a chosen job field. Chapter 4 provides information about obtaining employment or entering a training program. The last chapter about on-the-job experiences encourages students to communicate effectively. Many exercises are intended for use in small groups in which participants can exchange information and experiences. Role playing, in which participants act out the parts of both employer and employee, is used throughout to allow students to see both sides of the issues and evaluate their response to a given situation. End notes for each chapter are appended. (YLB)

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Learning for Earning:
A Basic Skills and Employability Training Manual for Adult Students

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Learning for Earning: A Basic Skills and Employability Training Manual for Adult Students

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Introduction

This manual has been developed to make available to adults, the means to improve both employment and academic skills. As the job market changes from a manufacturing to a service economy, adults need basic literacy, numeracy and computer skills to complete in today's job market. The job skills required for the 1990's include evaluation and analysis, critical thinking, problem solving, organization, synthesis, application, creativity, decision making and communications skills.

Service jobs also require interpersonal and problem solving skills not necessary for productivity in a factory. According to a study conducted in Philadelphia, six characteristics important in obtaining a job and progressing in a career are: attendance/punctuality, completion of work tasks, self-motivation, ability to follow both written and verbal instructions, cooperation, and communication skills. In a study of low-income youth employed in work experience programs, employers judged that 28% of the youth were deficient in areas of self-motivation and communication. However, none of these young people rated themselves as deficient in these areas. This discrepancy between the employer's view of the employee, ad the employee's view of her or his self is a problem that often causes the employee to be fired and not understand the reason for the termination.

This manual addresses the area of communication and other interpersonal skills as well as academic skills through a series of readings involving job situations. This approach is based on a belief that adults learn best when learning is applicable to their lives. They can use their life and work experience to enrich their learning in the classroom and extend classroom learning to life and work situations. The stories in this manual which involve experiences of adult students and the accompanying exercises encourage other adults to solve actual on-the-job difficulities while developing their reading, numeracy, and interpersonal skills. In this way, adults are challenged to solve real life problems, reflect on their own work situations, and apply this learning to solve their own problems more creatively.

The manual includes problem solving exercises which encourage participants to explore their skills and goals, the need for job training, and previous job difficulities. Many exercises are intended for use in small groups in which participants can exchange information and experiences. Role-playing, in which participants act out the parts of both employer and employee, is utilized throughout this manual allowing students to see both sides of the issues and evaluate their response to a given situation. This manual encourages an interactive relationship between the teacher and students, encourages adults to reflect, problem solve, and think critically to assess their interest, skills, and work behavior.

The development of this manual was accomplished by consulting with both employers and adult student working or seeking employment. Local employers were surveyed to ascertain the skills they deemed necessary for employment. Meanwhile, student writings were gathered about work histories, work experiences, and experiences seeking employment. These student writings, which reflect real-life work situations and difficulities, were used as the basis for the manual. Discussion questions, role-plays and exercises were developed around these writings to teach the academic and interpersonal skills regarded as most important by employers.

The Women's Program has been involved in teaching academic and employment skills in the Kensington community since 1976. Currently, the Women's Program offers education and employability classes in shelters for the homeless; a Private Industry Council Referral Center; classes and tutoring in basic literacy, adult basic education, high school equivalency preparation, and English as a Second Language, pre-training preparation, workplace literacy classes, educational and vocational counselling; tutor training; clerical/compute literacy training; human services training; a 24 hour bilingual domestic violence project hotline; personal counselling in English and Spanish; drug and alcohol counselling; an education and employability program for teen mothers; counselling for teens-at-risk; a drop-in childcare center and a Title XX daycare center.

Teacher's Notes

Each chapter in this manual begins with problem solving exercises. These exercises encourage students to reflect on the topic and recall their past experiences. In this way, the exercises provide a framework for the students to understand better the readings which follow. Many of these readings are written by Women's Program students involved in their own job search. The readings develop further the topic initiated in the opening exercise and allow the student to reflect on the topic from a variety of perspectives.

This manual begins by providing historical vingettes focused on women workers in the U.S. from 1900 to 1950. The second chapter involves an exploration of students' employment interests and goals. The third chapter acquaints the student with the job market and encourages exploration of a chosen job field. The fourth chapter provides information about obtaining employment or entering a training program. The last chapter is about on-the-job experiences and encourages students to communicate effectively. Although the manual follows a sequential order, the teacher knows her/his individual class best and should feel free to choose readings which are most appropriate to the class or use additional material.

Chapter one, A History of U.S. Women in the Workforce, highlights the struggles and achievements of women workers in the early years of the 20th century. It provides students with a perspective on history that is often not recognized. It also dispels the myth that women began working only with the advent of the Women's Rights Movement in the 1970's. These reading selections allow students to realize that they are not alone in their employment struggles. Instead, the struggle for good jobs and better working conditions has continued over many generations. To make these readings relevant to students, encourage them to take oral histories form parents or grandparents about their work experience. Many of the stories suggest topics for oral histories with family members or older members of the community. This research will enrich the students' knowledge of both history and employment.

The second chapter, Exploring and Identifying Goals, helps the student to clarify employment skills and goals. The first exercise encourages the student to examine the employment skills they already possess, the skills they desire, and the type of job to which their skills and interests may lead. This exercise helps adult learners to realize the many skills they possess and to set goals which are realistically based upon their skills and interests. The process of goal setting continues with exercises which encourage the student to explore her/his work values an beliefs about goal setting. The chapter concludes with the writings of other adult students who share their empowers goals. Discussion questions for these readings focus on identifying the skills and appropriate goals from the information in the readings. In setting realistic goals for the people in the readings, learner will better be able to set appropriate goals for themselves.

The third chapter, The Job Market, acquaints the reader with job options, expanding horizons beyond traditional careers. Students often limit their career choices because they are only aware of jobs held by family members of high visibility "glamour jobs" which require extensive education. Both men and women often gravitate toward jobs which are traditionally held by people of the same sex. Either of these approaches automatically limits the student's perspective and excludes many exciting careers. This chapter begins with an exercise which encourages an examination of traditional job roles. The next exercises explore the area of math anxiety which often unconsciously limits women's career choices. The chapter concludes with essays by women who have chosen both traditional and non-traditional careers.

Chapter four, Obtaining Employment or Entering a Training Program, offers the next step for a student seeking employment. First, it provides information and problem-solving exercises to help students decide whether they should enter employment or an occupational training program. This is followed by an exercise to assist students in beginning a job hunt in their communities. Next, students learn interviewing and testing skills which are often required to enter a job or a training program. This chapter does not include information on job applications or resumes because this information is covered extensively in many other books. The chapter concludes with stories by adult students who discuss various methods of getting a job, what to look for in a job or training program, and barriers which prevent employment. Discussion questions encourage students to reflect upon the best way to conduct their own job search.

Chapter 5, On the Job, focuses on the successes and difficulities adults may experience on the job or in a training program. Disagreements with co-workers or supervisors, family problems, lack of childcare, racism, and sexual harassment by a supervisor or co-workers are some of the problems which may cause someone to quit or be fired form a job or training program. Exercises and discussion questions in this chapter highlight communication, assertiveness, and problem-solving skills as ways to avert some of the above difficulities. Readings by adult students illustrate various difficulities, including racism and sexual harassment, on the job. Students learn the appropriate agencies to consult when they experience unfair treatment from employers or co-workers.

Because work is of such crucial importance to adults, the topic of work is one which will interest many adult students. Learning is enriched as students bring their experience and knowledge of the work world to the classroom. Based upon a belief that adults learn best when classroom instruction is applicable to and reflective of their life experience, this manual is constructed to reinforce this crucial link between classroom instruction and work life experience. Thus, the student is engaged in a learning "circle" in which her/his life experience informs classroom instruction and vice-versa. This goal is accomplished through exercises in which students are encouraged to problem solve the difficulities of the worker and determine appropriate behavior in difficult work situations. In each of the readings and exercises, students should be encouraged to reflect critically upon their own work experiences. In this way the readings and exercises will become more meaningful to students and aid in learning both academic and employment skills. After completing this manual, students will better be able to obtain and retain employment, to make career decisions, and to realize their own career goals and dreams.

CHAPTER I

VOICES FROM HISTORY

CHAPTER 1
VOICES FROM HISTORY

It is a common misconception that women began working with the advent of the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960's. American women have always worked both in the home and for wages. However, their labors have only recently begun to be recognized. For centuries women have contributed their labor as unpaid housewives. They have raised new generations, run communities as well as their own homes, and set up and maintained schools. On farms, women worked right along side the men: tending animals, planting crops, harvesting crops, in addition to performing all the indoor household chores.

Women have also worked outside the home for years. By 1910, 55% of black women and 23% of all women worked for wages. In the early 1900's women often did piecework, sewing or embroidering at home, to earn money. Women were paid by the number of items they produced - by the piece. If she worked her hardest, a woman might earn 35 cents a day when a loaf of bread was 5 cents.

In the 1910's and 20's women often worked long hours (12 hour days or more) in "sweatshops" - factories which had very poor working conditions. One such sweatshop was the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, notorious for its terrible working conditions. In 1911 a fire broke out in this factory. The company had locked the doors to prevent the women from taking breaks or stealing. Women could not escape and there were no fire extinguishers available. One hundred forty (140) women died in this fire.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire galvanized a labor movement which was already quite strong. In the 1920's women were on the forefront of organizing workers to fight for better working conditions. Many women led strikes and picketed factories with unfair practices and unsafe working conditions. The labor organizing of the 1920s paved the way both for better working conditions for all workers and the labor unions of today.

Even more women entered the workforce with the beginning of World War II in 1940. When men went to war, many factory jobs were left open. Women were badly needed to fill these jobs necessary d6 wartime production. The number of women in the workforce rose from 12,500,000 in the beginning of the war to 18,500,000 by the end of 1945. The American woman worker during the war was symbolized by Rosie the Riveter, a solidly built woman in overalls who welded rivets into the sides of ships. For the first time many women, especially black women, were well paid for their work. At the end of the war, men came home and women were fired from their factory jobs so that the returning soldiers could take them. Many women resisted giving up these good paying jobs.

This is but a short history of some of the contributions women have made to the American labor force. This chapter includes a sampling of readings which highlight the struggles and successes of the workers in the early 20th century.

EXERCISE 1
HISTORY OF WOMEN WORKERS

The top 3 occupations of women workers have been left blank on the following graph. What do you think the top 3 occupations were for each year? Write down your predictions in the blanks, then check them on the next page.

EXERCISE 1 - HISTORY OF WOMEN WORKERS

The top 3 occupations of women workers have been left blank on the following graph. What do you think the top 3 occupations were for each year? Write down your predictions in the blanks then check them on the next page.

HISTORY OF AMERICAN WOMEN WORKING
TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS FROM 1870 TO 1980

	1870	1890	1910	1930	1950	1970	1980
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.	Milliners, Dress Makers	Teachers Elementary School	Teachers Elementary School	Other Clerks (non-sales clerks)	Private House hold workers	Teacher Elementary School	Nurses (registered)
5.	Teachers Elementary School	Farmers	Dressmakers	Sales Clerks Seeamstress	Teachers, Elementary School	Typists	Waiters
6.	Cotton Mill Operators	Laundry Workers	Farm Laborers (working on non-family farm)	Farm Laborers (unpaid family work	Waiters	Waiters	Teachers Elementary School
7.	Laundry Workers	Seamstress	Cooks	Bookkeepers and Cashiers	Bookkeepers	Sewers and Stichers	Nurse's Aides
8.	Woolen-Mill Operators	Cotton-Mill Operators	Stenographers and Typists	Laundry Workers	Sewers/Stichers (factory work)	Nurses (registered)	Sales Work
9.	Farmers and Planters	Housekeepers	Farmers	Nurses	Nurses (registered)	Cashiers	Sales Supervisor
10.	Nurses	Clerks and Copyists	Sales Clerk	Cooks	Cashiers	Private House-hold Cleaners	Typists

SOURCES: Women's Bureau Bulletin (No. 218), U.S. Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment & Earnings, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1985.

HISTORY OF AMERICAN WOMEN WORKING
TOP 10 OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS FROM 1870 TO 1980

	1870	1890	1910	1930	1950	1970	1980
1.	Domestic Servant	Domestic Servant	Domestic Servant	Domestic Servant	Stenographers, Typists and Secretaroes	Secretaries	Secretaries
2.	Agricultural Workers	Agricultural Workers	Farm Labor (unpaid family workers)	Teachers, Elementary School	Other Clerical workers	Sales Clerk	Cashiers
3.	Tailors and Seamstresses	Dressmakers	Laundry Workers	Stenographers and Typists	Sales Clerk	Bookkeepers	Bookkeepers
4.	Milliners, Dress Makers	Teachers Elementary School	Teachers Elementary School	Other Clerks (non-sales clerks)	Private House hold workers	Teacher Elementary School	Nurses (registered)
5.	Teachers Elementary School	Farmers	Dressmakers	Sales Clerks Seeamstress	Teachers, Elementary School	Typists	Waiters
6.	Cotton Mill Operators	Laundry Workers	Farm Laborers (working on non-family farm)	Farm Laborers (unpaid family work	Waiters	Waiters	Teachers Elementary School
7.	Laundry Workers	Seamstress	Cooks	Bookkeepers and Cashiers	Bookkeepers	Sewers and Stichers	Nurse's Aides
8.	Woolen-Mill Operators	Cotton-Mill Operators	Stenographers and Typists	Laundry Workers	Sewers/Stichers (factory work)	Nurses (registered)	Sales Work
9.	Farmers and Planters	Housekeepers	Farmers	Nurses	Nurses (registered)	Cashiers	Sales Supervisor
10.	Nurses	Clerks and Copyists	Sales Clerk	Cooks	Cashiers	Private House-hold Cleaners	Typists

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QUESTIONS

1. The top occupation for women from 1870-1930 was a domestic servant. Why do you think this changed in 1950? Why weren't women secretaries before 1950?

2. From 1870 to the present, many women have been nurses. How do you think the job of a nurse has changed since 1870?

3. What jobs did your mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother have? Was it one of the top ten occupations?

RESEARCH

Interview an older woman in your family or neighborhood and ask her what her job was and when she worked. Ask what she was paid and what the conditions in the workplace were.

EARLY 1900's

The next two stories are by women who were midwives in the early 1900's. Midwives were women who assisted women in delivering babies. Many women worked as healers and midwives in American between the 1700's and early 1900's. It wasn't until the late 1890's that the medical field became dominated by men.

JOSEPHINE RILEY MATTHEWS [1]

Born October 3, 1897 in Aiken County, South Carolina

During four decades as a licensed midwife, Mama Jo safely delivered more than 1,300 babies, black and white, in rural South Carolina. She graduated from high school at age seventy-four. In 1976 the state named her Woman of the Year and Outstanding Older American.

I am the fourth. My great-grandmother was a mid-wife, my grandmother was a midwife, my mother was a midwife, and then it dropped down into my lap. I didn't have any children. I am not a birth mother.

As far as I know, two or three women have said they waited on themselves, they would get everything ready and deliver their babies, tie and cut the cord and go on. But I know it is a hard job. To be able to help the mothers and the babies, it was a pleasure. Before I left home on a labor case, or if I had to leave in a rush, I would ask the Lord to go with me to help me do this delivery and it seems like it just opened the way.

There was one, she was supposed to go to the doctor and she didn't go. I said I am not going to deliver this baby but I will take you to the hospital and I took her in my car and started to the Lexington hospital. I had stopped to get some gasoline on the road. We were, I reckon, about five miles from Lexington and she said, "This baby's coming." I said, "Well, you have to take care of that 'cause I got to handle this wheel." She didn't have a bit of trouble.

I had one father that just about passed out. I said, "Go to the kitchen and bring me that kettle of hot water." So he come back just shaking, shaking. His aunt was there. I told her, "You take him." She put him on the bed so he didn't know when the baby come. The mother, she was doing all right. He's the one that fainted.

The funniest thing happened. The baby was about a year old and I was passing that way and I said I'm going to stop in here and see this baby. The oldest little boy was about four years old, I reckon, and there were two under him, and the baby. When I got there he was taking care of the baby. The four-year-old said, "Miss Josephine," he said, "now we want this one but don't bring no more them babies here. We'll keep this one, but don't bring no more in that little black bag." The parent was telling I brought the babies in a bag. The way he said it and the way he looked, he wasn't joking.

I was supposed to retire when I was seventy-two years old, but I was seventy-seven when I retired. On my seventy-sixth birthday, a lady had triplets. It was quite a birthday present.

Well, the Bible says the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak. So the woman is supposed to be the weaker sex, but they sure have to stand up for the men a lot of times. I'll bet you one thing, if the man had to have the first baby there wouldn't be but two in the family. Yes sir, let him have the first one and the women the next one, and his time wouldn't come around no more.

QUESTIONS

1. Josephine says her great-grandmother was also a midwife. When do you think she started her practice?
2. Do you think Josephine liked her job? Explain your answer.
3. Josephine writes, "If the man had to have the first baby there wouldn't be but two in the family." Do you agree? Why or why not?

MY MOTHER'S GRANDPARENTS 2

by Carmen M. Rivera

My mother's grandparents were born in Corazal, Puerto Rico. They lived there for a while then moved to Barranquitas, Puerto Rico where they brought up my grandparents. My grandmother used to be what we call a Comandrona, which means she use to deliver babies when there were no doctors around.

My grandmother used to earn her living washing and ironing for her friends and neighbors. She also used to sew bedspreads, drapes, and dresses to sell. She also did lots of cooking. Like stuffed potatoes, pasta filled with meat and one of our favorite platters - rice and beans. It would go with anything.

Before my mother had finished the second grade, she was out of school. She tells me she just stood around the house and helped out with the house duties and taking care of her brothers and sisters. There were eight of them with her. She would also milk the cows, pick coffee out in the field and weed tobacco. Then she got married and had my two older sisters. She went to work in a hospital as a dietitian with the influence and help of friends.

QUESTIONS

1. List all the jobs Carmen's grandmother had (include the jobs she did at home).
2. Do women work as hard now as they did in the past? Explain your answer.

WRITING

1. Should women be paid for taking care of children and the house? Write why you think they should or should not be paid.

2. Do you think her husband should have helped Carmen's grandmother with house chores? Should men help out with housework? Write your opinion.

1910's

The next collection of stories are about women who worked in factories between 1910 and 1930. Many women worked under poor conditions and with very low pay during that time. During this era, the union movement began to organize workers to protest poor working conditions.

Along with other women, Ella May Wiggins, an Appalachian textile worker, organized workers in the textile mills of the South. She joined the union when four of her children died of whooping cough:

Four of them died with whooping cough, all at once, I was working nights and nobody to do for them, only Murtle. She's eleven and a sight of help. I asked the super to put me on day shift so's I could tend 'em, but he refused. I don't know why. So I had to quit my job and then there wasn't any money for medicine, so they just died. I never could do anything for my children. Not even keep 'em alive, it seems. That's why I'm for the union. So's I can do better for them.

Ella May often used songs to inspire workers and remind them of the importance of the union during strikes when times were very hard for workers. Here is one of her songs.

MILL MOTHER'S LAMENT [3]

We leave our home in the morning,
We kiss out children good-bye,
While we slave for the bosses,
Our children scream and cry.

And when we draw our money,
Our grocery bills to pay,
Not a cent to spend for clothing,
Not a cent to lay away.

And on that very evening
Our little son will say:
"I need some shoes, mother,
And so does sister May."

How it grieves the heart of a mother,
You every one must know;
But we can't buy for our children,

Our wages are too low.

It is for our little children,
That seem to us so dear,
But for us, nor them, dear workers,
The bosses do not care.

But understand, all workers,
Our union they do fear,
Let's stand together workers,
And have a union here.

QUESTIONS

1. Why does Ella May encourage workers to join the union?
2. Do you think working conditions have changed since 1929 when the song was written? How?
3. Why do you think wages were so low in 1929? What happened that year?
4. Do you know know other songs about unions or the labor movement?
5. Interview an older person you know who worked between 1910-1930. Ask them if they were involved in the labor union movement and what was involved in labor organizing in that era. Tell the class what you learn.

Occupational hazards were commonplace for factory workers in the early 1900's. Some occupations even had their own particular diseases. Many painters had "wrist drop" (an inability to hold their hands straight) because of the lead in paint. The Mad Hatter in Alice in Wonderland was actually a reality. Hatters, or people who made hats, used mercury in the production of felt. The mercury fumes cause madness in many workers. Very little attention was paid to these diseases. They were considered an ordinary part of life.

The next story is about a young woman working in an embroidery factory in the early 1900's.

Industrial Health: Case No. 45, Sadie G. [4]

Sadie is an intelligent, neat, clean girl, who has worked from the time she got her working papers in embroidery factories. She was a stamper and for several years before she was poisoned, earned $10 a week. In her work she was accustomed to use a white powder (chalk or talcum was usual) which was brushed over the perforated designs and thus transferred to the cloth. The design was easily brushed off when made of chalk or of talcum, if the embroiderers were not careful. Her last employer therefore, commenced using white lead powder, mixed with rosin, which cheapened the work as the powder could not be rubbed off and necessitate restamping.

None of the girls knew of the change in powder, nor of the danger in its use. The workroom was crowded and hot, the stampers' tables were farthest from the windows and the constant use of the powder caused them to breathe it continually and their hands were always covered with it.

Sadie had been a very strong, healthy girl, good appetite and color; she began to be unable to eat, had terrible colic, but continued to go to work in spite of the fact that she felt miserable. Her hands and feet swelled, she lost the use of one hand, her teeth and gums were blue. When she finally had to stop work, after being treated for months, for stomach trouble, her physician advised her to go to a hospital. There the examination revealed the fact that she had lead poisoning - which was unaccountable as no one knew that her work had involved the use of lead until some one who had been on the job also, recalled hearing the manager send a messenger out with money several times to buy a white lead power.

Sadie was sick in the hospital for six months - (losing $10 per week). She said her employer bought off several of her witnesses, but before the case came to trial two years later, several of them also became ill and consequently decided to testify for her. The employer appealed to the girl's feelings and induced her, on the day of the trial, to accept $150. He said that he had business reverses and consequently would be unable to pay in case she won.

Her lawyer was suing for $10,000. At the present time the girl is 23 years old and thought she has apparently good health, she is no longer strong and is very susceptible to disease.

"Case No. 45, Sadie G." Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, Albany, N.Y. 1912.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Sadie become ill?
2. Why did her employer use lead powder instead of chalk or talcum powder?
3. Are workplaces safer now than in the early 1900's? How? Why?
4. Are there occupational hazards now? What are they?
5. What can workers do if they feel their workplace is unsafe?

The strikers of the early 1900's were often very violent. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, an organizer for Industrial Workers of the World, describes a strike at a textile mill in Massachusetts.

THE LAWRENCE TEXTILE STRIKE [5]

The strike broke with dramatic suddenness on January 11, 1912, the first payday of the year. A law reducing the hours of women and children under 18, from 56 hours a week to 54 had been passed by the Massachusetts legislature. It affected the majority of the employees. The employers had strongly resisted the passage of this law. Now they cut the pay proportionately in the first pay envelope. Wages were already at the starvation point. The highest paid weavers received $10.50 weekly. Spinners, carders, spoolers and others averaged $6 to $7 weekly. Whole families worked in the mills to eke out a bare existence. Pregnant women worked at the machines until a few hours before their babies were born. Sometimes a baby came right there in the mill, between the looms. The small pittance taken from the workers by the rich corporations which were protected by a high tariff from foreign competition, was the spark that ignited the general strike. "Better to starve fighting than to starve working!" was their battle-cry. It spread from mill to mill. In a few hours of that cold, snowy day in January, 14,000 workers poured out of the mills. In a few days the mills were empty and still - and remained so for nearly three months. It was estimated that there were at least 25 different nationalities in Lawrence. The largest groups among the strikers were: Italians, 7,000; Germans, 6,000; French Canadians, 5,000; all English speaking, 5,000; Poles, 2,500; Lithuanians, 2,000; Franco-Belgians, 1,111; Syrians, 1,000; with a sprinkling of Russians, Jews, Greeks, Letts, and Turks.

Ettor and Giovannitti organized mass meetings in various localities of the different language groups and had them elect a strike committee of men and women which represented every mill, every department and every nationality.

There were 1,400 state militiamen in Lawrence, which was like an armed camp. Clashes occurred daily between the strikers and the police and state troopers. Ettor and Giovannitti were arrested on January 30, 1912. A tragedy on the picket line gave the authorities the excuse to get rid of Ettor and Giovannitti. In a fracas between police and pickets, a woman striker, Anna La Pizza, was killed. The two strike leaders, along with a striker, Joseph Caruso, were lodged in the county jail. Caruso, who had been on the picket line, was charged with murder, and the strike leaders were charged with being accessory to murder because of their speeches advocating picketing.

The militiamen were mostly native-born "white-collar" workers and professionals from other parts of the state who openly showed their contempt for the foreign-born strikers. Colonel Sweetzer, their commander, banned a mass funeral for Anna La Pizza. He ordered the militia not to salute the American Flag when it was carried by strikers. His orders were "Shoot to kill. We are not looking for peace now." Many acts of brutal violence were committed by these arrogant youths on horseback, such as riding into crowds and clubbing the people on foot. When they marched afoot, they carried rifles with long bayonets. On the same day Ettor and Giovannitti were arrested, an 18 year old Syrian boy striker, John Rami, was bayonetted through the lung from the back, and died. In the course of the strike several persons were injured with bayonets. The orders were to strike the women on the arms and breasts and the men on the head. (This was actually reported in a Boston paper). Suffering increased among the strikers. They had no financial reserves. They needed fuel and food. Their houses, dilapidated wood-frame barracks, were hard to heat. Because of this poverty, a proposal was made by some of the strikers that we adopt a method used successfully in Europe - to send the children out of Lawrence to be cared for in other cities. The parents accepted the idea and the children were wild to go.

On February 24, 1912, a group of 40 strikers' children were to go from Lawrence to Philadelphia.. At the railroad station in Lawrence, where the children were assembled accompanied by the fathers and mothers, just as they were ready to board the train, they were surrounded by police. Troopers surrounded the station outside to keep others out. Children were clubbed and torn away from their parents and a wild scene of brutal disorder took place. Thirty-five frantic women and children were arrested, thrown screaming and fighting into patrol wagons. They were beaten into submission and taken to the police station. There the women were charge with "neglect and improper guardianship and ten children were taken to the Lawrence Poor Farm. The police station was besieged by enraged strikers. Members of the Philadelphia committee were arrested and fined. It was a day without parallel in American labor history. A reign of terror prevailed in Lawrence which literally shook America. . . Famous newspaper reporters and writers flocked to Lawrence.

At the insistent demand of Socialist Congressman Victor Berger of Milwaukee, the House Rules Committee held a hearing in Washington, D.C. in March 1912. More than 50 striker witnesses came from Lawrence to tell their stories and show their pay envelopes. The cause of the strike, extent of their poverty, the conditions of their lives, the violence of the authorities, were all revealed by them to the American people in this Congressional hearing. . . There was no more interference with the children leaving Lawrence after that...

On March 1, 1912, the American Woolen Company announced a 7.5 per cent increase in salary in 33 cities. On March 6, 125,000 workers in cotton and woolen mills of six states were raised 5 to 7 percent. On March 14, the Lawrence strike was settled with the American Woolen Company, the Atlantic Mill and other main mills. Twenty thousand workers assembled on the Common to hear the report of their committee. It was the first time in six weeks they were allowed to use the Common. Haywood presided at the meeting and introduced the delegates of all the nationalities. The demand which they had won secured an increase in wages from 5 to 20 percent; increased compensation for overtime; the reduction of the premium period from four weeks to two weeks and no discrimination against any worker who had taken part in the strike.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did workers at Lawrence Textile strike?
2. How many hours did the new law say women and children should work? How does that compare to the present 40 hour work week? How many hours a day did people work in 1912?
3. What happened when the strikers went to the railroad station to take their children to Philadelphia?
4. Why do you think the police were so violent?
5. Did conditions improve at Lawrence Textile?

Find these words in the dictionary and write the definition in your own words.

locality
nationality
advocate
militiamen
dilapidated
frantic
besieged

1930's

In the 1930's came the Great Depression which brought low wages, unemployment and poverty for many Americans. Many women continued to labor simply to make ends meet.

Emmaline Rafferty describes her family's life during the depression.

MEALS [6]

Even during the depression I could make a meal for 50 cents. I'd have hamburg and I'd stretch it with potatoes, carrots. You'd put bread on the hamburg to stretch it, or oatmeal.

There were good neighbors in those days. These girls in my neighborhood who had more than I, used to send food down. You don't get neighbors like that today. Even though we had less, our meals were more nutritious.

There was always a pot of soup on the stove. No snacks. We'd buy a bushel of apples and make apple butter, baked apples, and poor man's cake. Everything was made from scratch.

I made candy, molasses patties, that we would sell. We always made our own rootbeer in big tubs. I remember the Oleo. You had to squeeze this little red egg into this big piece of lard to make the yellow color of margarine. Evaporated milk stretched it.

I was having my third child and my mother-in-law didn't know it was going to be born then. He was born at home. She went out to the movies that night and when she came home the other 2 kids had candy thrown all over and I was in bed delivering. They told her mom is sick. Kids didn't know anything about having babies back then. My father worried the 1st time I went to the hospital to have my 4th child. He said you won't get the right baby. I used to get caught easily. There was no birth control back then. My father said some women who tried to self abort died. My father, even being a physician, wouldn't tell you anything about the facts of life. They kept everything a secret. You learned by experience in those days. When I asked how a baby came out, my mother's reply was the same way they go in. I had my last child at Temple Hospital. It only cost me $20 back then for delivery fee and hospital bill.

QUESTIONS

1. How did Emmaline raise money during the depression? List the things she did for her family.
2. Emmaline says she didn't know about the facts of life when she was growing up. Do you think it's a good idea that children get more information about sex today? About the birth of a baby? How would more information be helpful?

WRITING

Interview a family member who lived during the depression. Ask them what it was like and write a story about it.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

by Hortense R. Lundy

After I got out of school, would you believe, I did anything; cook, bottle washer, anything. It was hard to find work because I wasn't a commercial student or anything. There wasn't anything else I could do unless I could "go on" to school. I would have liked to, but I always had to work. By the time I got a little bit of money, I had trouble with my grandmother being sick, my grandfather being sick, and then they died. After that my mother was sick, so it was always something taking whatever money I made. It was hard for Black women to get work in those days. Oh yes! They use to have ads in the paper if you were in housework. A lot of times they wanted high school graduates and sometimes they wanted light-colored. It used to be in the ads. In the Philadelphia papers I'm talking about. They just put "light-skinned colored for domestic work like child-nursing or cooking and serving. The wages were as low as $6, $8, $10 a week. They didn't take out taxes. Then things were cheaper. A lot of times you had more left.

After I got married, I did different things. I did some housework at first and then I worked for a tailor. I went to night school for millinery and tailoring. I also went to a novelty class for a couple of years. We did anything - lampshades, little fancy pillows, whatever came up we thought we'd like to do. I went to Bach Vocational School at 8th and Mifflin.

I worked in a fur cleaning plant. You know when they clean furs it's a different process than just dry-cleaning. They clean them in a large bin, but it turns like a washing machine. They clean them with sawdust and chemicals, so that it's beaten into the coat. After it comes out, you open up the corners and you put it in a big machine that blows the stuff out. I use to put those corners back. They had to be done so you couldn't tell they had been opened. After that I worked in a tailor shop mending clothes. At this place I only put the lining in the trousers by hand. These were the better suits. The company was Baker at 26th and Reed. I didn't stay there very long because I was allergic to the lint and stuff.

QUESTIONS

1. List the jobs Hortense had.
2. Why does she say it was hard for Black women to find work in those days?
3. Do you think life is easier for Black women now than it was during Hortense's life? Why or why not?

1940's

In 1940, the United States entered World War II. As men left to fight the war in Europe, women were desperately needed to fill their jobs. The government began a campaign to encourage women to join the labor force, especially as factory workers (a non-traditional job for women in 1940). For perhaps the first time in history, the strength of women workers was recognized.

This is an example of an outdoor billboard which encouraged women to take factory jobs.

"What Job is mine on the Victory Line?" [8]

If you've sewed on buttons, or made buttonholes on a machine,
you can learn to do spot welding on airplane parts.
If you've used an electric mixer in your kitchen,
you can learn to run a drill press.
If you've followed recipes exactly in making cakes,
you can learn to load shell.

QUESTIONS

1. This ad indicates that women can learn welding if they have sewn buttons. Do you agree that household work prepares women for the workforce? If so, how?
2. Why were women encouraged to take non-traditional jobs during the war?
3. Are women encouraged to do non-traditional jobs now? Why or why not?
4. Interview a women who worked in a factory during World War II. Report to the class or ask her to come to class and talk about her experience.

WORLD WAR II - WOMEN POWER IN DEMAND [9]

In 1940, unemployment was still officially 19.1%, and twice as high for women and black workers. But with war orders pouring in and thousands of men leaving for the front lines, business faced a severe labor shortage. As they had many times before, the employers turned to the reserve labor force of women and black workers.

Over six million women entered the workforce during the war, making women one-third of the entire labor force. Black women were affected even more radically by the increased demand for labor. Over 400,000 domestic workers left their former jobs and went to work in war industries. The number of black women in farm work dropped from 20% to 7%, because of mechanization and the availability of industrial jobs in cities like Atlanta, Detroit, and Oakland.

Rosie the Riveter appeared as the new patriotic symbol for women. Donning overalls, learning new skills and operating huge machinery, women in metal, rubber, chemical and defense industries smashed the stereotypes of women's work. The same propagandists who earlier declared that women's place was in the home now argued that it was women's duty to keep defense production flowing. They even spread the fable that bottle-fed babies were healthier than breast-fed.

Working women - as always - were faced with a double burden as workers and homemakers. Childcare became a necessity to more women workers than ever before. The government was forced to open hundreds of childcare centers, but these centers accommodated only 10% of the children needing childcare. And when the war was over, the employers and the government had no intention of keeping most of the centers open.

On the whole, women workers made important advances between 1939 and 1945. The number of women in unions quadrupled to 3,500,000 by the end of the war. New jobs added to women's earnings, yet their wages still averaged only half the wages of men. Black, Chicana, Puerto Rican, and Asian women made considerably less than that.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the unemployment rate for all workers in 1940? For women and black workers?
2. Why did domestic workers change jobs?
3. What is a propagandist?
4. The author says, "The same propagandists who earlier declared that a woman's place was in the home now argued that it was women's duty to keep defense production flowing." What does this mean? Why did propagandists say different things about a woman's role during the war?
5. Why did the government open childcare centers during the war?
6. Do you think women need federally funded childcare centers now? Why are there so few federally funded childcare centers now?

THE WAR ENDS - BACK TO THE HOME [10]

by Joyce Haupin

The pay was good, especially because of overtime; and women read and heard about their remarkable abilities, their strength, ingenuity, resourcefulness and courage in learning quickly to work just like a man. But at the end of the war, when employers wanted to fire women workers, the message changed: "A woman really doesn't like to work outside of her home. Not that she couldn't, not that she shouldn't, but she prefers the creative occupation of full-time homemakering, washing dishes, mopping floors, and doing the family wash." These propagandists ignored indications that women did not agree. Surveys conducted by organizations as diverse as the United Automobile Workers, the Department of Labor, the Saturday Evening Post and the Ladies Home Journal showed that a majority of women wanted to keep their jobs.

As a matter of fact, they did stay in the labor force, but not in war jobs. They reluctantly returned to the laundries, the eating and drinking establishments, domestic service, and clerical work. Carefully avoiding facts, the media continued to pour out happy homemaker slush from the end of the war right through the 1950's. All this time the number of women in the work force increased, including working mothers and older women. Women were too busy working to read or go to the movies and discover they didn't want to work. Most women will concede that putting a stack of paper in alphabetical order is about as dull as housework, but the obvious advantage of filing is that you get paid though not very much.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did employers want to dismiss women workers after the war?
2. Was it true that women no longer wanted to work outside the home after the war?
3. What jobs did women take after the war?
4, What do the newspapers and magazines say about working women now? Why?

1950 TO THE PRESENT

The following stories are told by women labor union organizers who worked after the 1950's. Their stories show that the struggles and successes of working women continue into the present day.

Lillian Roberts began working as a nurse's aide in a hospital in 1940. She became a union organizer when she saw the injustices in the hospital. In the following story, she relates the discrimination she faced as one of the few black hospital workers in the 1950's and describes the struggle for fair labor practices at the hospital.

BECOMING A HOSPITAL WORKER

I really didn't know what I wanted to do. And I finally decided that maybe I would like to be a teacher. But none of those things appeared to be fulfilling to me. I didn't see my aspirations as a nurse. I certainly didn't see becoming a doctor. Or any of those things, because you see, another thing is, I didn't have any heroes. That's very important. It's almost like you don't belong, you know? It was just a very strange feeling. I used to look at my mother and wonder why she would live in a society without almost saying, "Well, this is terrible. I'd rather be dead than to be alive. Because what is there for me? This ho-hum, am I just to exist?'

And finally, in high school, I had to come right home because there were gangs and all. My mother was very strict about you getting home on time and all these other things. And I didn't enjoy it, because I couldn't go to the dances; I didn't have dresses and things like other kids. I felt very inferior, inferior to other black kids, because I didn't have, you know, things. We were on welfare and had to wear welfare clothes. You're earmarked. You're on welfare so you're less than somebody else. So if other kids' parents had something that was not from welfare that they wore, it gave them a certain amount of prestige within the ghetto. These are things that impact upon a child, and they don't say anything, but they make their mark.

I always wanted to work, but I never could find a job. When I was about 14 I was going to high school, and I got a job as an aide in a Catholic hospital. And I went down, and kept going down and finally they hired me. They had a good meal there, that was one nice thing. They fed you very well. You had what the patients had and the food was good. Well, the hospital would hire someone that said they were 15, so I just took up my age because they were paying nothing anyway. You worked eight hours, and you probably got paid like 11 dollars for two weeks' work. I was really exploited. That must have been about 1940.

But at any rate, I went home in 1946 and I started looking for a job. I'd heard about this hospital job at the University of Chicago Lying-In Clinic. So I decided to go over there, and there was a nursing supervisor who came from New York. And while they never had any black nurse's aides, she was going to hire her first one. That was me.

I don't think she had too much of a choice because the war had taken most of the whites away from those menial jobs into jobs that were paying a lot more in defense plants. And so they were really uptight about help at that point.

I realized I could make more in another kind of job, but I wanted to do something that I felt...I really needed at that time to feel that it was necessary for me to even go on living. So I took that job.

And right away some of the people in the kitchen told me that they didn't have black nurse's aides. I didn't think anything of that. I was about 18, 19 then. And so I proceeded to do my job, and I loved it. I never wanted to be bossed a lot, so what I did was find out what it is I'm responsible for, and I did that. And I would do more than that, because I didn't want to be ruled all the time. I remember being very lonely. While there were blacks in the kitchen, there were no black aides, and the white ladies didn't want to talk to me. So I sort of ignored them. I mean, at that point, who cares?

They were older than I. I was very young, too, you know, compared to them. And they just looked at me with curiosity, and I never bothered. And finally they got to the place to kind of like me, 'cause I didn't bother anybody. They would be knitting and all, and I started learning during my breaks as well as they did, and we'd talk and we got to be very, very good friends.

I worked in the nursery, that was the first job. And that was diapering and feeding the babies. I did a lot more there. Cleaning, first of all. I did a lot of cleaning, and I kept things sterile and got the formula ready for the babies, and all. It was, of course, glass around the nursery. And you would think that I was some monkey on display. The doctors and everybody were looking in the window. And just constantly watching me. And this one doctor, it was the kind of watch, that he was looking for some reason to say, "Get her out of there," because you had to wash your hands in between babies and all, so he wanted to know whether I was observing the techniques and all.

I was working with a white southern nurse, Mrs. Montique. It was just she and I. So we got along very well. And I was able to relate to her, asking her every day I wanted to learn something new. And so I would ask her about all kinds of deformities that we would see in the nursery, the color of a baby, and why this was happening and why the other thing was happening. And then I explored with her using my own analysis of things. Sometimes I'd be just

observing and putting some common sense into it. Before long, when the interns would come to examine the babies I could tell them what was wrong with every baby. I'd have them lined up for them. And they got so that they depended upon me, because I really got to know.

So the doctors, they get to know that you know your job and you can tell them certain things: "I think it would be wise if you did this." But you'd always have to do it in such a discreet way not to step on their pride, because they're supposed to be the expert, you know.

I had gotten so good at it, with so many compliments from so many people going down to the office - I didn't realize it - that they've scheduled me when Mrs. Montique was off - to be in charge. And they didn't tell you were in charge, but I'd get a whole mess of new students in there who didn't know what to do. I would very diplomatically have to direct them, although they resented to hell that I was both black and a nurse's aide. But I had to do it in such a way that they didn't feel that I was claiming to know more than they did. And I realized that. Because they said, "Well, you're just an aide, and blah." I said, "I know that." I said, "I'm not concerned about that, but we do have feeding times here." And I would go on to talk about what we had to do and how would they suggest we go about doing it, as if they knew anything, they never had worked there. But that was the kind of thing that I found I had to do.

And they would never allow me to send in the report to the changing guard of nurses. They never dignify you with that. Even though it would help you give better care. There were limitations on what I could do. But there was variety. And then you get to the point where you conquer that and you want to go on to something else. I mean that was my feeling. I wanted to learn something else. So when I got to a boredom stage, I wanted to move on because it was important. I looked forward to the job when I thought there was something in it. I did my job and all. It was something I loved, because I loved people.

After I had been there for a while...I really didn't think about getting a different job. I was hoping to make that a better job, and I was a little angry that they were always crying about not having nurses, and there was never an opportunity for a person like myself to be one. And when I loved it, and would have been a very good one, I thought. I always felt that I was cheated out of that opportunity.

I couldn't have afforded to go to nursing school. I needed the income, and you can't just quit the job and go to school. I was caught in a box, and the salary wasn't big enough to save to go to school. And getting into nursing schools was a real racist problem as well. So there was a combination of many things. And I used to say, "Why does this country have to go elsewhere and get people when people like myself want to do something? We really want to do it,

and we're not forced into it." And that was always a dream of mine. So I guess that when I went on to organizing, that was one of the first things that I saw was done. I set up a program in New York so that aides could be trained on the job to become licensed practical nurses.

LEARNING TO ORGANIZE

So, to keep us going, I kept on working. I always worked the days, because I had an opportunity because of the seniority I built up. I stayed there 13 years. I also worked in the emergency room, central supply, and the operating room.

After ten years there, I got involved in the union, our union, AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees) which was already in the hospital but it didn't do too much. It was the pressures that got me involved.

That was when ten of the nurse's aides had left. And because I had the ability to work in many places, I was being exploited - myself and a few others who had the skills to walk into a situation and get it in order. And we were very proud of our work. Because once I would do something, I would want not to be questioned. I mean, if I had to prepare instruments for an operation, I would do that very thoroughly. And when you got a pack with my name on it, you knew it was in order.

What I did was I went to the shop steward, who had been there a long time, about this extra work. And to her the union was just picking up the dues and, you know, "don't rock the boat." She did nothing. So I called the union office, and I said: "Look, we been paying our dues for years now. We need the union. We don't have help here, and it's killing all of us. And the best people are going to have to quit. So what's the union going to do about it?" So I called them very angry. They said, "Yes, that's an over workload grievance." I said, "Well, who's going to handle it?" They said, "The steward. Then if you don't want her you'll have to get a new steward elected," which was not a good answer for us - "and to handle it yourself."

So then I came back, and I told the girls what was said. They said, "Well, let's get rid of her. Let's get another steward, and you be it." I said, "No, I don't want to be it." And they said, "Well you have to. Either we quit or we stand up and fight."

And so then I decided and went home and told my husband. "If I'm going to take this stewardship, then I've got to go to meetings, because I really have to know what I'm doing. I'm going up against some heavies." So he said, "All

right. Go ahead and take it." I told him how many meetings it involved - one or two a month. He really didn't want me to get involved. But I told him I had to. It was either that or quit, which meant the rent wasn't going to be paid.

So then I started. I got the union contract, and I heard what the woman had told me that it was an over workload grievance. And I began to document the people who had left and what we were doing. Then the election was held and I won the election. So then I asked the ex-shop steward who was also the secretary of the union if she'd be kind enough to introduce me to the nursing supervisor in my new role. I really didn't get that much leadership. She took me and then I pulled out my little contract book, and I told the nursing supervisor I was there on behalf of all the young ladies who worked at Lying-In Hospital, that we enjoyed working there very much, but we felt we had been exploited and that ten people had left and they had not replaced them. And we certainly didn't mind working when there was an emergency of any kind, but we felt that to be scheduled every day to do three people's jobs was just too much. She screamed at me and told me that no ten had left, and who was I to come into her office telling her. And I told her I was the shop steward. And I don't know what she was accustomed to, but she and I were going to have a very different relationship. Because by then it was either fight or quit. I said, "Here's a contract book. Our union and the university had felt that these were the fair rules - name of the game. And I'm going to go according to them, and I hope that you're going to do the same. You have five days in order to respond to my grievance." And she stared screaming and yelling. And then I got up and told her she had the grievance, and I'd see her in five days. And I left.

So she went up to my boss the next day when I was off and wanted to know what kind of worker I was, because she wanted to fire me. And my boss said, "You can't do that. She's the best worker we have. I didn't have any reason - nothing to bring her up on charges for." So she said, "When she comes tomorrow, you have her come downstairs."

When I came in, I went downstairs. So the nursing supervisor said, "I want you to apologize." And I told her I was not apologizing. I had nothing to apologize for. I said, "Either you hire the people - you've got three days to do it - or I am going to appeal it. That's all. There's nothing to argue about." And so I left her again with her mouth open. And she hung around very upset. But at the end of the five days she brought ten girls up and introduced them to us. I was on my way, you know.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Lillian hired as the first black nurse's aide at the University of Chicago Lying-In Clinic in 1946?
2. Did she experience discrimination on that job? If so, how?
3. Why did Lillian like her job?
4. Why did she join the union?
5. What happened when Lillian confronted the nursing supervisor about the over workload grievance? What would you have done if you were Lillian in this situation? Whatwould you have done as Lillian's supervisor?
6. Have you ever experienced discrimination on the job? What happened? How did you handle it?

JESSIE LOPEZ DE LA CRUZ

Jessie de la Cruz worked as a migrant laborer, picking crops all over the United States. She battled against the injustices she saw in the life of farmworkers and become a labor organizer for the United Farmworkers (UFW) This story was recorded as an oral history in which she tells the story of her life and of her work as an organizer.

WORK IN THE FIELDS

I'd been raised as a child that the woman just walked behind the husband and kept quiet. But in work I've been equal to men since I was a child, working alongside men, doing the same hard work and earning the same wages.

From 1939 to 1944, we stayed at Giffen's camp number three. We were still following the crops. We would go out to pick cotton or apricots or grapes here near Fresno, or we would go farther north to Tracey to pick peas. When there was no work chopping or picking cotton, we'd go to Patterson or San Jose to pick apricots. Arnold did the picking and I did cutting for the drying-out in the sheds. The apricots would be picked out in the field or in the orchard. They'd bring 'em in, in trucks, and they'd just set them beside us. They always had a boy or two that would dump these apricots on a table. We would have a knife, and we'd cut around it and take out the pit, and just spread them out on top of big trays. After we filled all these trays, they would come and take these out where they were dried. And they'd put some more on the table on the trays for us to cut.

We always went where the women and men were going to work, because if it were just the men working it wasn't worth going out there because we wouldn't earn enough to support family. In one camp we were living at, the camp was at the edge of a cotton patch and the cotton needed to be thinned. We would start early. It was May. It got so hot, we would start around 6:30 am and work for four or five hours, then walk home and eat and rest until about three-thirty in the afternoon when it cooled off. We would go back and work until we couldn't see. Then we'd get home and rest, visit, talk. Then I'd clean up the kitchen. I was doing the housework and working out in the fields and taking care of the kids. I had two children by this time.

Other times we would pick grapes. The sand is very hot. It gets up to about a hundred-eight, a hundred-ten degrees during the summer out in the fields. We wore tennis shoes to protect our feet from the hot sand. I'd get a pan and put it under the vine and cut the grapes. The grower wanted us to cut them, not pull them. You had to hold the grape bunches gently - not to crush the grapes in your hand, and you'd have to use your knife to cut off the stem and place the grapes in a pan. After the pan was full, you would spread these grapes

in a paper tray where the sun was shining. But I was using my knife this way, and kept on cutting and cutting toward me, and these knifes have a hook on them, and the handle is kind of rounded. One day I came to a real hard one. The stem was drying so I had to use a lot of strength, and this knife gave me a cut on my neck. It scared me! Arnold said to just sit down and stay there. He washed the blood off. That was my first experience working out in the field after I married.

The hardest work we did was thinning beets. You were required to use a short handled hoe. The cutting edge is about seven to eight inches wide and the handle is about a foot long. You have to bend over with the hoe in one hand. You walk down the rows stooped over. You have work hard and fast, as fast as you can because you were paid by the row, not by the hour. I learned how to do it without straining my back too much. I put my hand on my left knee and I got so good at it that I'd leave one beet on each stroke. You're supposed to pull one off with your hand if you leave two. I'd go as fast as I could and I always leave one and one. But I was walking backward and going fast. But when I wanted to stand up, I'd have to go very slow and I couldn't stand up straight. I still have a bad back, and I think I got it from the short-handled hoe.

I also used a short handled hoe in the lettuce fields. The lettuce grows in a bed. You work in little furrows between two rows. First you thin them with the hoe, then you pick off the tops. My brothers-in-law and Arnold and I and some other friends worked there picking the tops off the lettuce. By the time they had taken up one row, I had taken up two. The men would go between the two beds and take one row and break the little balls off. But I took two rows at a time, one with each hand. By the time I finished my two rows at the other end, it was close to a mile long, and my brother-in-law had only taken on row part-way. He said, "I'm quitting. If Jessie can beat me at this kind of work, I'm no good at it." So he never came back. About three or four other men wouldn't go back to work because they were beaten by a woman. They said, "I'm ashamed to have a woman even older than I am work faster than I can. This is women's jobs." I said, "Hey! What do you mean? You mean the men's job is washing dishes and baking tortillas?" They said working out in the fields was women's work because we were faster at it!

Out in the fields there were never any restrooms. We had to go eight or ten hours without relief. If there wasn't brush or a little ditch, we were forced to wait until we got home! Just the women. The men didn't need to pull their clothes down. Later, when I worked for the Farmworkers, in a hearing I said, "I was working for Russell Griffen, the biggest grower in Huron. These big growers have a lot of money because we earned all that money for them. Because of our sweat and our labor that we put on the land. What they do instead of supplying restocks and clean water where we can wash our hands, is put posts in the ground with a piece of gunny sack wound around them." That's where we

went. And that thing was moved along with us. It was just four stakes stuck in the ground, and then there was canvas or a piece of gunny sack around it. You would be working, and this restroom would be right there. The canvas didn't come up high enough in front for privacy. We made it a practice to go two at a time. One would stand outdoors and watch outside that nobody came along. And then the other would do the same for the one inside. Then we'd go back to work.

Growing up, I could see all the injustices and I would think, "If only I could do something about it! If only there was somebody who could do something about it! That was always in the back of my mind. And after I was married, I cared about what was going on, but I felt I couldn't do anything. So I went to work, and I came home to clean the house, and I fixed the food for the next day, took care of the children and the next day went back to work. The whole thing over and over again. Politics to me was something foreign, something I didn't know about. I didn't even listen to the news. I didn't read the newspapers hardly at all. True Romance was my thing!

But then late one night in 1962, there was a knock at the door and there were three men. One of them was Cesar Chavez. And the next thing I knew, they were sitting around our table talking about a union. I made coffee. Arnold had already told me about a union for the farmworkers. He was attending their meetings in Fresno, but I didn't I'd either stay home or stay outside in the car. But Cesar said, "The women have to be involved. They're the ones working out in the fields with their husbands. If you can take a woman out to the fields, you can certainly take them to meetings." So I sat up straight and said to myself, "That's what I want!"

When I became involved with the union, I felt I had to get other women involved. Women have been behind men all the time, always. Just waiting to see what the men decide to do, and tell us what to do. In my sister-in-law and brother-in-law's families, the women do a lot of shouting and cussing they get slapped around. But that's not standing up for what you believe in. It's just trying to boss and not knowing how. I'd hear them scolding their kids and fighting their husbands and I'd say, "Gosh! Why don't you go after the people that have you living like this? Why don't you go after the growers that have you tired from working out in the field at low wages and keep us poor all the time? Let's go after them! They're the cause of our misery! Then I would say we had to take a part in the things going on around us. "Women can no longer be taken for granted that we're just going to stay home and do the cooking and cleaning. It's way past the time when our husbands could say, "You stay home! You have to take care of the children! You have to do as I say!"

Then some women I spoke to started attending the union meetings, and later they were out on the picket lines.

I think I was made an organizer because in the first place I could relate to the farmworkers, being a lifelong farmworker. I was well-known in the small towns around Fresno. Whenever I went to speak to them, they listened. I told them about how were excluded from the NLRB in 1935, how we had no benefits, no minimum wage, nothing out in the field - no restrooms, nothing." I would talk about how we were paid what the grower wanted to pay us, and how we couldn't set a price on our work. I explained that we could do something about these things by joining a union, by working together. I'd ask people how they felt about these many years they had been working out in the fields, how they had been treated. And then we'd all talk about it. They would say, "I was working for so-and-so, and when I complained about something that happened there, I was fired." I said, "Well! Do you think we should be putting up with this in this modern age? You know, we're not back in the twenties. We can stand up! We can talk back! It's not like when I was a little kid and my grandmother used to say, "You have to especially respect the Anglos, Yes sir, Yes Ma'am!" That's over! This country is very rich, and we want a share of the money these growers make off our sweat and our work by exploiting us and our children!" I'd have my sign-up book and I'd say, "If anyone wants to become a member of the union, I can make you a member right now." And they'd agree!*

*While I was working for the union, I learned about negotiating for a contact. In 1966, when we were negotiating for a contract with Christian Brothers, Dolores Huerta** asked me along. "I want you to learn this because eventually you might have to take over the negotiating of the contract." I'd sit there at those meetings with the Christian Brothers, who were Catholic priests. Dolores and the ranch committee would argue, "You can't say we're asking for too much money because just think, you have over fifty varieties of fine grapes that go into making the most expensive wines for the church and they sell at very high prices. So why can't these workers share some of the money that comes out of those grapes that they've harvested?" They would bargain back and forth this way. The ranch committee would caucus - we would walk out of the meeting room, and we'd drink water and discuss what we were going to say when we went back. We'd say, "They have to meet our demands." We were asking for protective clothing; that they supply the pans we picked the grapes in. We also asked for a smoke device for the tractors. We were on our knees working beside the tractors and we would feel dizzy, smelling all of the smoke from the*

***The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) was established by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933. Its purpose was to settle differences between employers and employees. The board was set up under the National Labor Relations Act, which made union negotiations between employers and employees legal for the first time in the United States. The act, and the board set up to implement it, were historical landmarks in the history of unionism. But two major groups of workers were excluded from the act and its board - domestic workers (who were mostly women) and farmworkers (who were mostly Chicanos, Filipinos, and Blacks). Both major groups were among the poorest of the United States working class.**

****Dolores Huerta, one of the founders of the union, has held key leadership positions in the United Farm Workers Union.**

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exhaust pipe for hours. We also didn't have any water on the tractors. To get water we had to go with the tractor driver to where the water was, and then we'd lost time picking and lose money. We demanded that they supply each crew with a can of drinking water so we could drink water right there when we where thirsty.

Our demands were met, but it was hard bargaining. At one point, one of the Christian Brothers' lawyers said, "Well, sister, it sounds to me like you're asking for the moon for these people." Dolores came back, "Brother, I'm not asking for the moon for the farmworkers. All we want is just a little ray of sunshine for them!" Oh, that sounded beautiful!

It was up to me to get all the membership cards in order alphabetically. When the grower came to us to ask for workers, I'd look for the ones who were in the union longest, and also working under the Christian Brothers contract. I'd call them: "Can you be ready Monday or Wednesday morning? Be there on time, because you're going to start working for Christian Brothers." One of the things we had to explain over and over to the people who had been working for a ranch many years was that no one was going to take their jobs away. The growers told them, "If you sign up for Chavez's union we'll fire you." But the union contract guarantees that the people working here have the right to stay here, so we always made a list of names of people who were working at the ranch. And when the union organizes then, they have the highest seniority, they're the first ones hired.

The hiring hall was also a place where people could meet and talk. A lot of people were migrants who needed to get to know each other. The people were there all the times were against the migrants. I said, "We have to get these people together. We can't be divided." I was at the hall all day. People would drop by and I'd introduce them.

The second year we had a contract I started working for Christian Brothers. The men were doing the pruning on the grape vines. After they did the pruning, the women's crew would come and tie the vines-that was something we got changed. We made them give pruning jobs to women.

I was made a steward on the women's crew. If there were any grievances, it was up to me to listen and then enforce the contract. For example, the first time we were paid when I started working, during the break*

**Every union has its workers elect "shop stewards" from their midst. These officially-elected union representatives remain on the job, working side-by-side with the other employees. Their responsibility is to provide information to their co-workers about the union, and to deal with any complaints, "grievances", workers may have. The steward is empowered to go to the manager or boss on the workers' behalf, and to consult with other union officials about on-the-job problems.*

the supervisor would come out there with our checks. It was our fifteen-minute break, which the contract gave us the right to. He always came then! We had to walk to the other end of the row, it took us about five minutes to get there, the rest of the fifteen to get our checks, and walk back, and we'd start working. This happened twice. The third time I said, "We're not going to go after our checks this time. They always come during our break and we don't get to rest." So when we saw the pickup coming with the men who had the checks I said, "Nobody move. You just sit here." I walked over to the pickup. I said to the man inside, "Mr. Rager, these women refuse to come out here on their break time. It's their time to rest. So we're asking you, if you must come during our rest period, you take the checks to these ladies." From that day on, every payday he would come to us. That was the sort of thing you had to do to enforce the contract.

QUESTIONS

1. Describe the work Jesse did in the fields.
2. Do you think she worked as hard as men? Why or why not?
3. What injustices did she see as a farmworker?
4. Have you ever been treated unjustly at work? How? What did you do?
5. Why were the Christian Brothers hesitant to meet the union's demands?

CHAPTER 2

SKILLS IDENTIFICATION

AND

GOAL SETTING

CHAPTER 2

SKILLS IDENTIFICATION AND GOAL SETTING

Exercise 1 - Skills Assessment/Self-Esteem

When seeking employment or an employment training program, it's important to examine one's own job skills. This will lead to choosing an employment goal which makes sense. Many people don't have a realistic sense of the job skills they already possess. Instead of accurately assessing the abilities they have, people often feel that they have no job skills at all. However, each of us keep many jobs skills in the activities we do everyday. This exercise encourages an examination of the skills each of us has and an opportunity to set goals which utilize the skills.

Step I:

On the next page, list all the activities you do within a week on a daily basis in the column labeled "Activities". For instance, you might buy groceries, pay bills, do household repairs, or do laundry during a regular week. List all of these activities in the first column.

Having completed the first column, look at each activity you do and list all the skills you display in that activity in the second column labeled "Skills". For instance, if you do grocery shopping for your family, you must decide how much to spend and budget your money. You use reading skills reading labels, you use math skills comparing prices. You also prioritize and organize your list, by buying what is most important to your family with a limited amount of money.

After you have completed the "Skills" section for each of your activities, examine the list of employment skills you display on a daily basis and give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back.

Step II: Goal-Setting

Divide into small groups of three or four. After each person reads his/her list of skills, take five minutes per person to discuss the jobs to which these skills might lead. Think about jobs which have always interested you and how the skills you presently possess might lead you to that position. List those jobs under the third column labeled "Jobs".

After each person in the group has a list of jobs which might interest them, take five minutes to examine the jobs individually and list the additional skills or education they need to get those jobs. List these under the "Skills Needed" column. After each group member has a list of the skills they need to learn, each person can read their list to the group.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

Activities	Skills I Have	Jobs	Skills I Need

STEP III: Long Range vs. Short Range Goals

Often people set goals which will not be attainable for a long period of time or which require extensive education. For instance, one woman had a great interest in animals and caring for pets. She often trained and did first aid for her own pets and those of her neighbors. She had both skills and an interest in working with animals. Her long-term goal was to be a veterinarian. However, she realized that to attain this goal, she needed four years of college and four years of veterinary school. As this woman had three small children, it was not possible for her to spend 8 years in further education. She talked to people in that field and got a job as a receptionist in a veterinary hospital and decided that a job as a veterinarian's assistant which demanded much less schooling, would satisfy her interest in working with animals and provide her with a good -paying job. Therefore, she revised her long-range goal from a veterinarian to a veterinarian's assistant, and used the job as a receptionist in a veterinarian's hospital as a short-term goal which would lead to the long-term goal.

Examine your employment goal and see whether it is appropriate at this time. If it's not, think about what might be a goal which is more easily attainable at this time. What short-term goals or steps will help you to reach your goal? Discuss your short and long-term goals within your group.

SAMPLE:

Long Term Goal	*Immediate Goal*	*Intermediate Goal or Revised Final Goal*
Veterinarian	*Receptionist for a veterinarian*	*Veterinarian's Assistant*
Teacher	*Volunteer tutor/ Aide*	*Paid Teaching Assistant*

EXERCISE II: Exploration of Work Values

This exercise helps you examine the goal(s) set in the previous exercise. Share answers with the group and discuss if the choices made in this exercise will be achieved in the job selected in the previous exercise. Match the goals set in the previous exercise. Check up to ten of the following which are most important to you.

GOAL SETTING [1]

Exploration of Work Values

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU IN YOUR JOB?
CHECK UP TO TEN THAT YOU FEEL APPLY TO YOU

1. Earning a lot of money is important to me. ____
2. I enjoy work that allows me to help people. ____
3. I want a job that is fun. ____
4. Benefits (insurance, paid holidays, sick days, retirement funds, etc.) are important to me. ____
5. I want my work to be challenging. ____
6. My evenings and weekends are important to me, so I don't want a job that requires a great deal of overtime. ____
7. I would get bored doing the same thing over and over, so I want work with variety - some excitement! ____
8. I enjoy making decisions and supervising others. ____
9. I don't want work that is emotionally draining. I want to be able to forget my job at five o'clock. ____
10. I like to work with people; sociability is important to me. ____
11. I want a job where I can move ahead in the company and gain recognition. ____
12. I like to follow set procedures. I am comfortable with work that is ordered and predictable - no surprises. ____
13. I want work that is creative and artistic. ____
14. Pleasant working conditions are important to me. ____
15. I want work that does not require years of training. ____
16. I really enjoy working with the public. ____
17. Respect and admiration for me and my work are vital to me. ____
18. A feeling of personal satisfaction and accomplishment is what I need most from my work. ____

ADDITIONAL WRITING EXERCISE: From the list above, choose the statement which most interests you and use it as the first sentence of an essay on the topic. Share your writing with others.

Exercise III:

Free Association [2]

This writing exercise helps explore feelings about setting goals. These sentence stubs should be completed spontaneously with whatever pops into your head. Don't censor your responses. Select at least one completed sentence and write a paragraph with that sentence as the main idea. Discuss how your ideas relate to the job(s) chosen in the first exercise.

Setting goals is _____

Reaching my goals depends on _____

If I had money I could _____

I am scared of _____

Going back to school is _____

Setting a goal, but never reaching it, would be _____

I would like to be famous for _____

When I was a child, I wanted to be _____

What is standing in the way of my ideal career is _____

Not having goals is _____

My secret ambition is _____

One excuse I've used for not reaching my goals is _____

I don't think I should have to _____

Going to work is _____

One thing I want to accomplish is _____

I'm afraid people will think this is silly, but I really _____

I am very good at _____

It is hard for women to get ahead because _____

When I was little, my parents thought my goals were _____

My immediate goal is _____

In five years I want to be _____

INSTRUCTIONS: READ THE FOLLOWING ESSAYS AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

My Ideal Job as a Fashion Designer
by Louise Fahy

My ideal job would be to be a fashion designer. I would enjoy designing clothes for all types of people and I would be making new designs. I would sit behind a drafting table with drawing tools and instruments and lots of paper. I would work in a large building like they have downtown in Center City. I would work with decent and respectful people who would accept me as a person.

I would like a job right now, but I have no experience and no training. I don't even have my GED, which is why I can't get a job right now.

— I would like my working conditions to be fair. I would like holidays off, paid vacations, health benefits for medical, vision and dental expenses for myself and my children.

I would like my supervisor to be fair, reasonable and understanding. I would expect to be treated the same as every other employee. This way I would enjoy my job as a fashion designer and I would feel comfortable. I would be getting paid for work I would like doing.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How is Louise's ideal job related to her skills?
2. What type of work environment does she desire?
3. Will the job she wants produce the working environment she wants?
4. What other jobs might Louise like if she can't get a job as a designer?

DREAMS

My first job at sixteen was working at Ekin Masonic Nursing Home. It was somewhat rewarding and good experience because it gave me the chance to get acquainted with the elderly.

After working there a year and a half, I was laid off because of a budget crisis, but my supervisor gave me an excellent reference when I applied for another position as a Nursing Aide at the Uptown Home for the Aged. I was hired instantly. However, this kind of work is not for me because I have had a strong desire for music as long as I can remember. I love music with a passion. My dream is to become a pianist no matter how long it takes. Since I am 37 years old, my fingers are not too old to break in. I have been playing for four years now and plan to never quit. I believe dreams do come true.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How does Rebecca's ideal job relate to her skills?
2. If you were Rebecca, what would be your immediate and intermediate goals?
3. Do you agree with the author that dreams do come true? Why or why not?
4. What jobs do you think the author could do which utilize her love of music?

WRITING

Describe a "dream job" you've always wanted and what you have done to attain it.

JOBS I HAVE HAD

I once worked at a steak house, cooking, managing, dishwashing and other duties which I enjoyed. Then, I worked as a maid in a hotel cleaning rooms which I didn't like because I felt that they were not playing me enough for the work I was required to do. I had to clean 20-25 rooms a day. The rooms were not much of a problem but in the bathrooms the supervisor always seemed to find hair even if it was only one piece. So hotel work was not for me if it involves cleaning rooms. Then, I worked at the hospital serving food to the patients which I enjoyed. Now that I'm on DPA I still need to work because DPA isn't enough to live on so I get out and look for things to do to make a little money. Sometimes, I'll ask people if they need their grass cut, their house painted, or their attic, basement or garage cleaned out. When I clean out a house, I also sell the furniture and get good money. Sometimes, I can get $500 or more depending on the furniture. I also do hair and have been doing it for twenty years or more. I love doing hair, and always will. Nothing and nobody will ever take that away.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is this person's ideal job? How is it related to her skills?
2. What immediate and intermediate goals would you create for this person?

WRITING

1. Brainstorm with your class the advantages and disadvantages of receiving welfare if you are a single parent with two children.
2. Write an essay describing all the jobs you've had. Which did you like best? Least? Why?

MOTHERS CAN BE INDEPENDENT

by Denise McNeil

I feel that mothers of preschool children are entering the work field more and more because we have a need to become more independent. If a woman has a job she can plan for herself as well as her family if things can't go right. For instance, take a woman that has a man that does everything like work, pay the bills, dress and feed the family. If that man should die or leave her she would not know what to do for her family.

The problem with women that stay home and depend on someone to bring home the money is the person that is working starts to feel that you are only out to get what you can. The person thinks that you're only taking and not contributing to the future of your family.

I think it's good for a mother to stay home and take care of the children. I feel that at a certain time in the children's lives the mother really should be there. One the other hand a woman needs to make a life for herself as well as her family. Women feel better about themselves when they have a job. If a woman has a man and that man is footing the bills, then the woman can help it she has to.

I just started a new job and I feel great about working. The fact that I have a job means no more public assistance hopefully. I think if a woman can get some type of job, be it part-time or full-time, it would make some type of difference in her life.

Working mothers don't have to be so dependent on others. Mothers can work and also take care of their families.

QUESTIONS

1. Why does the author feel that a woman should work?
2. What does a job mean to the author?
3. How does having children impact on job choices?
4. The author states, "a woman needs to make a life for herself as well as for her family." What do you think about this statement? What are ways a woman can make a life for herself?
5. What differences does a job make in someone's life?
6. What differences are there in the lives of "working fathers" and "working mothers"? Should there be differences in the jobs parents do at home? Do you think the roles of men and women should change? If so, how should they change?

WRITING (Select One)

1. Discuss with your class the support a woman working outside the home, with children needs from family members. Then, write about what support you get from your family and what support you need when you get a job.
2. Write how having children has impacted, or will impact, on your selection of a job.

ZOOLOGY

by Lisa Smith

I want to become a zoologist so I can travel around the world to help every type of animal. For instance I would love to visit Africa and learn about the climate and the different types of animals like hippos and lions. My dream is to have my own pet. What kind of pet? A panther, a big, black panther. I want to brush his teeth and take him for walks.

I went to Martin's Aquarium to see how much a panther costs. They said I would have to sign three contracts and pay $5,000.

QUESTIONS

1. What is a zoologist?
2. How much training will the author need to become a zoologist?
3. What are jobs which require less training which Lisa might enjoy?
4. What are appropriate immediate and intermediate goals for this author?

CHAPTER 3
THE
JOB MARKET

Chapter 3
The Job Market

Exercise 1 - Traditional Jobs

Step I:

Examine the following list of occupations. Add more occupations to the list by answering the following questions.

1. What jobs did people in your family hold?
2. What jobs do people on TV have?
3. What careers did you consider as a child?

Add these occupations to the following list.

Secretary	Engineer	Day Care Worker
Janitor	Carpenter	Biologist
Elementary School Teacher	Hairdresser	Auto Mechanic
Sales Clerk	Bookkeeper	Factory Foreman
Dental Hygienist	Secruity Officer	Firefighter
Cashier	Maid	Nurse
Truck Driver	Police Officer	Accountant
Dentist	Surgeon	Farmer
Physician	Homemaker	Drafter
Airplane Mechanics	Construction Worker	Computer Programmer
Veterinarian	Chef	Social Worker
Plumber	Pipe Fitter	Telephone Operator
College Professor	Machinist	Dressmaker
Television Repairperson	Welder	Electrician
Data Entry Technician		

Divide into small groups of 4 or 5. Look at the list and divide the occupations into 2 groups - traditional jobs for women and traditional jobs for men. (Traditional occupations for men are those in which at least 75% of the jobs are held by men). List traditional women's occupations under the women's column and traditional men's occupations under the men's column in step two on the next page.

Men's Occupations	Women's Occupations

Examine the two lists and answer these questions.

1. How do you think traditional women's jobs differ from traditional men's jobs?

2. Which list (women or men's) do you think involves more care taking (taking care of another person's personal needs?) Why?

3. Which list carries greater prestige or recognition?

4. Which list requires more formal training?

5. a) Compare the salaries of the following groups: white men and minority men, whtie men and white women, white men and minority women.
   b) Why do you think these salaries differ?

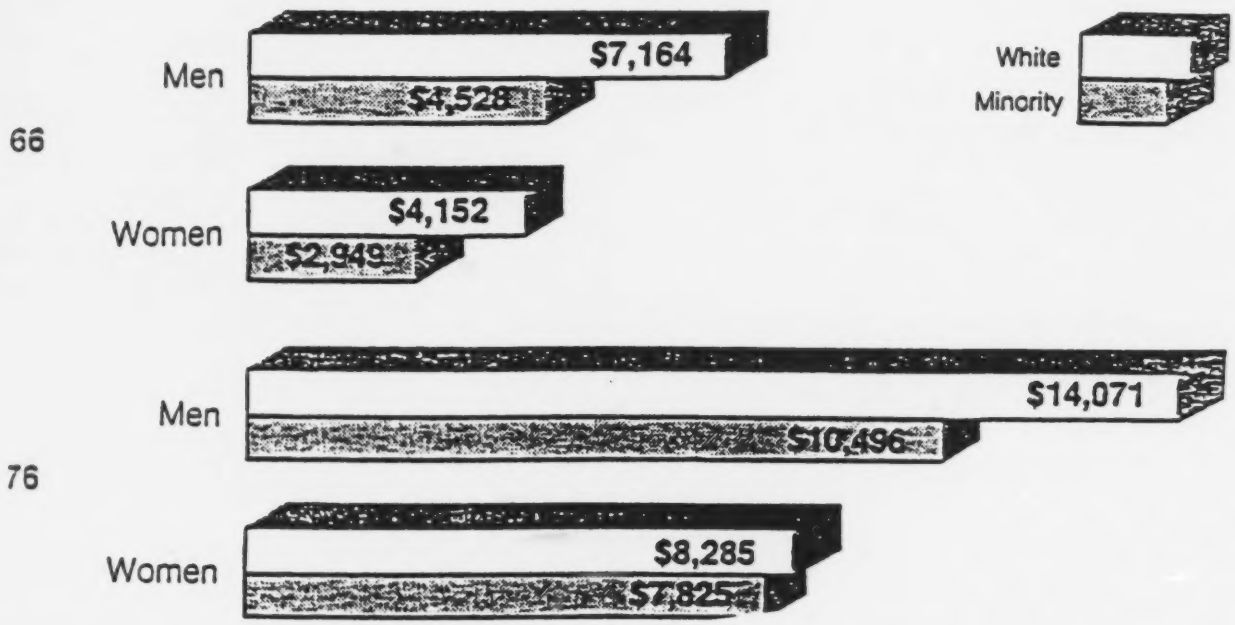
6. Why do you think traditional men's jobs pay more than women's, the salaries of white men and minority men, white men and white women, white men and minority women.

7. Why do white men earn more than women or minority men?

8. What "non-traditional" jobs would you like to have? What training does this job require?

EXERCISE 2
COMPARING SALARIES

FULLY EMPLOYED WOMEN CONTINUE TO EARN LESS THAN FULLY EMPLOYED MEN OF EITHER WHITE OR MINORITY RACES



1. What percentage of men's salaries do women earn?
2. What percentage of white men's and women's salaries do minorities earn?
3. Was there a change between 1966 - 1976?

Exercise 2
Part 2

Margaret Mead, a well-known anthropologist, studied many different cultures and wrote this about women's and men's work.

> *In every known society, the male's need for achievement can be recognized. Men may cook, or weave, or dress dolls, or hunt hummingbirds, but if such activities are appropriate occupations of men, then the whole society, men and women alike, votes them as important. When the same occupations are performed by women, they are regarded as less important.*
>
> *Margaret Mead*
> *Male & Female, 1949*

1. Restate, in your own words, what this quotation means.
2. Do you agree with the quotation?
3. If traditional men's work in our society included childcare and typing, do you think those occupations would have a greater prestige and be better paid? Why or why not?
4. During the 1800's, secretary was traditionally a man's job and carried with it, a much greater prestige than it does presently. Why do you think this is so?

EXERCISE 3

"Facts about Women Workers" [2]

Write the answers to the following questions about women workers. Then check your answers with the fact sheet on the next page. Discuss the answers.

1. What is the main reason most women give for working?
2. How much education must a woman have to equal the income of a man with an 8th grade education?
3. What is the average number of years of education a daycare worker must possess?
4. What is the average number of years of education a structural metal worker must possess?
5. What percentage of full-time female workers earn $15,000 a year or more?
6. What is the earnings gap between the average working woman's earnings and the average working man's earnings?
7. What are the average weekly earnings of a registered nurse?
8. What are the average weekly earnings of a secretary?
9. What are the average weekly earnings of a daycare worker?
10. What are the average weekly earnings of a carpenter?
11. What percent of secretarial jobs are held by men?
12. What percent of secretarial jobs are held by black women?
13. What percent of apprenticeships are held by women?
14. What percent of carpenters in this country are women?
15. Approximately what percent of women in this country live in poverty?
16. What proportion of poor families are supported by women in this country?
17. What is the unemployment rate of black teenage women?

Answer sheet for "Facts about Women Workers"

1. Economic necessity
2. 4 years of college - the average women with a college education still does not earn as much as a man without a high school diploma.
3. 14.6 years of education (two years beyond high school)
4. 12 years or a high school diploma. The average hourly earnings of a structural metal worker is $14.11 an hour compared with the average hourly earnings of a daycare worker with two years of college earning $4.02 an hour.
5. 33% of women compared with 69% of men.
6. On the average, women earn two-thirds less income than men. Latest figures reveal that for every dollar a man makes, a women makes 64 cents. Black and hispanic women earn even less. Female sales workers' earnings were only 52% of men's earnings in the same field.
7. $407 (this is the fourth leading occupation of all women workers in the U.S., requiring at least 4 years of education beyond high school).
8. $260 (This is the top leading occupation of all women workers in the U.S.)
9. $167 (This is the 14th leading occupation of women workers in the U.S.)
10. $325 (This is the 7th leading occupation of all men in the U.S. Only 5% of carpenters in the U.S. are women)
11. One percent
12. 10% - secretaries hold the highest paid position in the clerical field. Black women are under represented in the higher paying secretarial jobs. Just as sex discrimination exists for all women workers, black women suffer from both sex and racial discrimination in employment.
13. 6% - Despite federal regulations requiring apprenticeship programs to accept more women, the number of women serving as apprentices remains under ten percent. It is through apprenticeships that most people in the building and trades industry find jobs. Without having served as an apprentice, most women are locked out of this field.
14. 5% - This figure reflects the low number of women in apprenticeship programs.
15. 62% - In 1984, women accounted for 61% of all persons 16 years old and over who had incomes below the poverty level.
16. 48% - In 1984, more than 73% of poor black families were maintained by women and more than 49% or poor hispanic families were maintained by women.
17. 39.2% of black teenage women (in 1985) were classified as unemployed. Compare this rate with 7.49 for all women and 15.2% for white teenage women.

Sources: 20 Facts on Women Workers, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1986; Facts on U.S. Working Women, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1985; Women in Non-Traditional Careers (WINTC): A Training Program Manual, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 1985.

EXERCISE 4

Exploring a Job [3]

To obtain information about specific occupations, do an informational interview with someone who has a job in which you are interested. During the interview you can obtain any information you feel is important about the job: the training required, salary, working conditions, etc. Answer the following questions before you interview someone.

1. What job will you explore?

2. Why did you choose this job?

3. Choose a resource person you can interview about this occupation. (It may be a classmate's friend, family member or local employer).

4. Make a list of the things you want to know about this job. This is a partial list:

   What are the advantages of this job?
   Disadvantages?
   Salary?
   What training is necessary for this position?
   If necessary, where is training available?
   How many of these jobs are available?
   What is the work environment?

5. Make an appointment with the resource person. Explain that you would like to know more about his/her occupation and arrange a time to talk. Be clear that you are not requesting a job, but only want some information.

6. Meet with your resource person and ask the interview questions.

7. Share information you have obtained with other class members.

8. Discuss whether this job meets your needs. Are you and the job a good match?

Exercise 4 - Part 2
Example of an Informational Interview

Here is an example of an informational interview with Samantha Morse. Presently a construction manager, Samantha has been employed as a housepainter, carpenter's assistant, and bricklayer. In this inteview, D stands for Daryl, the interviewer, and S stands for Samantha. [4]

D - What is your job now?

S- I'm a construction manager. Basically, I represent the owner of the project. Somebody might own a house or have a building they want an architect to design or they want a builder to change. I work with the architect and review the architect's plans to make sure the architect hasn't made any mistakes - and they do. I make sure the plans are what Licensing and inspections needs for permits and code issues. Then I take the plans downtown and apply for the permits and the zoning, and then negotiate the bid if they're having several contractors bid on the project.

D - How did you enter your career as a construction manager?

S - I started out as a housepainter. When I rented apartments, I painted the walls, so I figured I could do this for money. I just started doing it on an odd job basis, and then I started buying equipment. I think that if somebody's interested in doing this kind of thing, they should save their money and buy a tool here and there. If somebody needs a particular job done of if you meet someone who needs a helper, you've got the tools to do the job. Tools are really critical, and they're expensive. But if you save a little bit from each paycheck, you can buy one thing at a time.

When I'd do a painting job, people would say to me, "As long as you're here, I've got this lock that needs to be fixed, and could you put up a set of shelves?" I did it and sometimes it worked out and sometimes it didn't. I never accepted anything that I thought was really over my head, so I got confidence. As I got more experience and more tools, I could do bigger jobs.

I finally got out of the painting business and started working for a friend of mine as a carpenter's helper. My attitude, and I think it's a good attitude to have, was "I don't care what you ask me to do: sweep the floor, pick up nails, take nails out of wood. I don't care, I'll do it. I'm here to learn."

It made me a little leery that they'd always ask me to get the coffee. I'd think, "I'm not going to be the only one who's getting coffee." Without being confrontative, I'd say, "Hey, I'll buy coffee today. Who wants to go?" I'd set up the situation so I wasn't the only one who gets coffee. At the same time, it was fine if they had asked me to sweep floors. I just wanted to put out to the people I was working for that I was a hard worker.

D - Why did you decided to pursue a non-traditional job?

S - I always wanted to. I like working with my hands. I like building and seeing stuff go from start to finish. I like being outdoors even though you freeze in the winter and roast in the summer. I like the freedom. You go here for two weeks and then you're somewhere else for a month. There are different hoagie shops, different diners. Sometimes you'll be out in the country, in the city, in rich neighborhoods, poor neighborhoods. It's really stimulating and not repetitious.

D - What are the advantages of non-traditional jobs for women?

S - There's a chance for advancement. I have done everything from mixing mortar and doing demolition to the white collar end of it. You can make lots of money. There's the satisfaction of seeing things in the city and saying, "I worked on that building." You feel like you've done something permanent in the city. If you're a secretary, you don't have the potential for advancement you have in a non-traditional job. You can also learn on the job site. If guys see you working hard, they'll teach you things and there's a lot to learn. You don't have to get dressed up and spend a lot of money for clothes in a non-traditional job. You get to be comfortable. You get lots of exercise and stay fit.

D - What are the disadvantages of non-traditional jobs for women?

S - You work outside, so it can be really hot or cold. If it rains, you often don't work that day. When I worked as a bricklayer, we wouldn't work if it was below 28 degrees (F). You're paid an hourly wage, so if you don't work, you don't get paid. It's not a job for somebody who's afraid of heights.

D - How does a woman enter a non-traditional job?

S - Do what you know. If you know how to paint, start painting. If you know someone who needs a helper, offer to help out so you can learn some skills. Women have started like that and it can definitely go somewhere.

Getting into the union is another way to start, but you have to get someone to sponsor you. Also, unions can be pretty mean to women. When I started out, I wanted to be in the union because it's good money and steady work. After I had worked for 12 years, some guys said, "Hey Sam, we'll sponsor you to get into the union. No problem." I said, "Hey, for what? So I can make $8 and hour and start out as a journeyman? Where were you 12 years ago when I needed you?"

D - What's the job market like for women in non-traditional jobs?

S - Very good. In fact, I think there's niches for women in home remodeling. It doesn't take a lot of sophisticated equipment. You can learn on the job. Many times home remodeling is something the women are involved in and they may feel more comfortable with women in their homes.

If you see a helper ad in the paper, you might call 100 of them before someone will hire you. If you go to the bar and you're talking to some guys, you might just find somebody who's willing to give you a chance. If you get in there and show them you're serious, you mean business, and you're mechanically inclined, it can work out.

D - Did you ever experience difficulty as a woman in a non-traditional job?

S - I've had my moments. It's hard to walk into the job and have everybody look at you like, "Hey, what's she doing here?" It's tough going up to ask for a job knowing that they think you can't do it. If they don't laugh at you outright, they'll laugh at you when you leave the room. You have to take a deep breath and know that this is really what you want.

I've been in situations where they "laid me off" and hired some guy because he needed a job. Once, they hired some guy as a carpenter after they'd laid me off. He nailed his hand to a board. I just laughed. I know I wouldn't have done that.

I've also had guys say, "You're taking away my job." I have a standard answer. I say, "Hey, you can have my job, but I'm going to give you all my bills." Whenever I'd say that they'd understand I needed the money for my bills just like they did. It's not in men's best interest to become feminists, so you can't approach it as an issue of equal pay for equal work.

Also, I needed to prove myself in this job more than a man doing the same job. The perception of me has not changed at all, even though I've been in this field for twelve years. When I work with a new man, the perception is that I'm there because of affirmative action. I make it real clear to them that I know what I'm doing. Knowing the vocabulary of the trades is very important. You're not going to get hired saying, "Hand me that whatchamacallit."

Just the other day, I went out to a job site with an inspector for L&I, the head contractor, and the carpenter. He went out after the demolition to decide what additional work was needed. They're all over 6 ft. tall and I'm 5'2". They all got in a circle to look at the blueprints and I was on the outside of the circle. I said, "I didn't bring my prints, could I borrow the prints, please?" They gave me the prints and I said, "I just want to see how these joists are." I climbed up this construction ladder. Women don't climb ladders in these men's minds. After I climbed the ladder, the circle was open. If a woman climbs a ladder in front of a man, he'll take her seriously. I felt like I had to cut through the crap and get down to business. They thought they were bigger, taller, and smarter and I knew nothing. I just had to figure out how to cut through that stuff and get on with the job.

D- What advice would you give a woman entering a non-traditional job who might anticipate getting that type of reaction?

S - Just think about that paycheck. Know that this is a good and decent living. Realize that you know as much as these guys and they had to start somewhere. Men aren't born knowing how to read a tape measure, they just get some breaks. If you have the mechanical aptitude and the desire, you can get someone to teach you. Don't think that it's going to take you longer than a man, or that you can't do as well. You also need to have confidence in yourself, even if it's only on the outside. You have to have the will not to give into that socialization of "It's so hard and women just can't do it."

When I went to work for that bricklayer, I didn't know how to dress appropriately. I used to come home at lunchtime and cry because my feet were so cold. I was strong, but bricklaying is the hardest work next to dishwashing I've ever done. You're constantly lifting 90 lb. cement bags, 60 lb. bags of lime, and 100 lb. bags of sand. I was mixing mortar, so I had to haul 3 bags of sand, 2 bags of lime, 2 bags of mortar, plus the water and the bricks. It took me two weeks to get in shape. I'd sit in the bathtub and think, "Oh my God!" But I didn't let it stop me.

Women have to believe they'll be strong enough. Men are always making things easier for themselves. Those big earth-moving machines have power steering. It's not so hard, but you have to be stronger then somebody who pushes a pencil. When I was working as a bricklayer, I felt as strong as most of the men. Generally, it's more stamina than brute strength, although masonry is an exception.

It's a myth that you have to be a hulk to do these trades. Take a woman who has two kids, 2 years and 6 months old. That 2 year old weights 25 lbs. You're picking that kid up and putting him down all day, plus you're carrying a 15 lb. baby on your back. That's the same as picking up a 2-by-4. In fact, I think it's easier picking up the 2-by-4. Think of all the grocery bags and laundry a woman carries in a normal day. Women tote plenty. In fact, the carpenter has a laborer to do the heavy work. They have a laborer to go down and get the 2-by-4. Men are always finding a way to bring their wives to work!

My feeling is "I'm making good money. I'm a hard worker. I know what I know, and there's always stuff I can learn." I think the best response if someone wants to get really confrontational with me, is not to take it personally like you're a woman. Take it personally like you're a person and get in the person's face. Say, "Look, I'm out here working here with you and what is your problem?" Like I say, the times I've gotten hassled have really been pretty few. I think women really have to believe in themselves. The jobs are out there if they can just tough it out.

MATH AND NON-TRADITIONAL JOBS FOR WOMEN

There are many reasons people limit their career choices. Women especially may not consider non-traditional occupations like carpentry or drafting because these jobs necessitate math. Although some women like math, many experience anxiety about performing math problems. They may feel anxious about getting the wrong answer or not working quickly enough. Math anxiety often impairs people's ability to excel in the subject of math.

Some women experience math anxiety because math is often considered a "Man's subject" and one in which women cannot succeed. Although untrue, this myth can limit a woman's ability to do math. A good way to start debunking the myth of mens' superiority in the field of math is to realize the myths that abound.

Exercise 5 - Myths about Women and Math

Work in groups of 3 or 4 to brainstorm all the myths you have ever heard about math, especially in regard to women and girls. Some common myths are:

There isn't a good answer unless it is exact.
You're not supposed to count on your fingers.
People who are good at math are also very quick at the answers.
Some people have a "math mind" and others just don't.
Boys are more likely to have a math mind than girls.

Add to this list and then share the lists with the class. Discuss the facts you know which can contradict these myths. Do you know any women who are good at math? Do all men have good math skills?

Exercise 6

The following Math Anxiety Bill of Rights can help to replace fear about math with more positive ideas. Read the Bill of Rights and make any additions or changes which you feel are important.

MATH ANXIETY BILL OF RIGHTS 5

I have the right to learn at my own pace and not feel put down or stupid if I'm slower than someone else.

I have the right to ask whatever questions I have.

I have the right to need extra help.

I have the right to ask a teacher to teaching assistant for help.

I have the right to say I don't understand.

I have the right not to understand.

I have the right to feel good about myself regardless of my abilities in math.

I have the right not to base my self-worth on my math skills.

I have the right to view myself as capable of learning math.

I have the right to evaluate my math instructors and how they teach.

I have the right to relax.

I have the right to be treated as a competent adult.

I have the right to dislike math.

I have the right to define success in my own terms.

Exercise 7
Problem-Solving Strategies

People often think there is only one way to solve a math problem. However, there are a variety of ways to solve them. The following list provides a number of different ways to solve math problems. Read the list and discuss the strategies. Have you ever used these strategies to solve a math problem?

Check which categories you can use to solve the problems which follow. Solve the problems using some of the strategies listed.

Check List of Problem Solving Strategies

ACT IT OUT - Role playing														
MOVE IT AROUND														
Use manipulatives														
Sort or classify objects														
Measure it														
PICTURE IT														
Draw a picture or diagram														
Close eyes and visualize part or all														
Use grids or arrays														
Look for patterns, likeness, difference														
Make a tally or graph														
TAKE IT APART														
Break into smaller problems														
Work backward														
Look for key words														
Identify known, what is needed														
Identify excess, insufficient information														
TRANSLATE IT														
Put into your own words (paraphrase)														
Think of an earlier problem														
Translate directly into math symbols														
Put answers back into problem to check														
CONTROL IT														
Make a guess table														
Make a list														
Simplify (use smaller numbers)														
Estimate, predict														
Follow directions														
Check arithmetic computation														
Ask if it makes sense														
AND...														
Do additional research														
Let your mind go (break set)														
Talk to other people, your partner, yourself														
Ask questions														
Use a calculator														
Sleep on it														

Problems

1. Sue bought 6 pencils at 20 cents each, 3 pens at 59 cents each, and 4 notebooks at 89 cents each. How much did Sue spend?

2. Marcia's Restaurant received a shipment of 12 cases of dinner plates and 15 cases of salad plates. Each case of dinner plates had 24 plates in it and each case of salad plates had 36 plates in it. How many plates did the restaurant receive?

3. Sylvia scored 221 points in all during the basketball season. If she averaged 13 points per game, how many games did she play?

4. A printing machine can print 80 lines a minute. How many lines can it print in 2 hours?

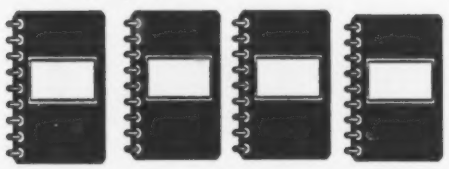
5. Carla's wages are increased from $3.80 an hour to $4.25 per hour. If she works 36 hours per week, how much more money will she earn before taxes (gross) in one hour? In one week? In one year?

Sample Strategies

Problem 1: = 20 cents each

Draw it:

= 59 cents each



= 89 cents each

20 + 20 + 20 + 20 + 20 + 20 =

59 + 59 + 59 =

89 + 89 + 89 + 89 =

Translate it : 6 x 20 =
3 x 59 =
4 x 89 =_____

_____ ANSWER

Problem 4:

A) Draw it 80 lines = 1 minute

_____ = 2 minutes

_____ = 3 minutes

B) Additional Research: How many minutes are there in two hours?

Problem 5:

A) Look for key words (How much more)

B) Break it into smaller problems:
1) If her salary increases how much more does she earn each hour, each week, each year?

C) Do additional research: How many weeks are there in a year?
How many workdays are there in a year, not counting holidays?

Exercise 8

Do the following series of word problems. When you've finished, consult the Strategy Check List to see how many problem solving strategies you have employed. Which strategies were most effective?

The Jolly Peddlar's Finest Hour

1. *Mrs. Jones stopped for gas at the Jolly Peddlar service station. When the friendly attendant checked the oil, he short-sticked and told Mrs. Jones, "You're down one quart." Oil sells to the station for 47 cents per quart. He charges $1.10 per quart. If he sells 50 quarts of oil, how much does he make? If he uses the empty-oil can trick, how much does he make on 50 sales?*

2. *While the attendant is checking under the hood of Mrs. Jones' car, he deftly slices a fan belt. Fan belts sell to the dealer for $1.47 and to the customer for $3.75 plus $5.00 installation costs. How much will a gas station clear if this scheme is repeated 50 times?*

3. *Suddenly, a warning light blinks on the dashboard. The attendant (having surreptitiously snipped a wire) expresses concern and fixes the problem by installing a new alternator. He charges only $75 to replace it. If an alternator costs him $23, how much can he make if he successfully fools 50 people?*

4. *An air filter costs a service station $1.93. Their price to customers (installed) is $5.50. The attendant shows Mrs. Jones how dirty her air filter is. She asks him to change it. After charging this much to 50 people, how much has the owner cleared?*

5. *Mr. Simpson pulls into the Jolly Peddlar station as Mrs. Jones pulls out. When the attendant checks under the hood of Mr. Simpson's car, he slips an Alka-Seltzer tablet into the battery. Alarmed at the bubbling he sees, Mr. Simpson asks the attendant to replace the battery. Batteries sell to the station for $27.50 and to the customer for $49.95. What will 50 successful tries of this fraud net the Jolly Peddlar?*

6. *Mr. Simpson also notices that the left rear tire on his car is very flat. He does not notice the ice pick in the attendant's hand. On each new tire sold, the station makes $12.95. When he has sold 50 tires this way, how much will he have made?*

7. *Mr. Simpson's attention is called to the oil on his shock absorbers by the concerned attendant. "You're going to run off the road if you try to drive with those worn shocks. For just $37, I'll fix you right up!" If he buys the shocks for $16, how much has the Jolly Peddlar made when Mr. Simpson gratefully agrees to get new shocks? What would he make on 50 such generous deals? Should he have obtained another estimate?*

8. The Jolly Peddlar has three credit card customers after Mr. Simpson leaves. They charge purchases for $4.10, $6.00 and $1.50. After slight alterations, his copy of the slips read $8.90, $16.00 and $7.50. How much did this sleight of hand net him? If he averages this much every day on credit card fraud, what will he make in 50 days?

VOCABULARY

Define the following words used in the word problems above.

1. **deftly**
2. **Scheme**
3. **surreptitiously**
4. **sleight of hand**
5. **installation**

Women's Work

by Dolores DeMar

Almost everyone has had to get a job and go to work at least once in their lifetime either to support themselves and others, to gain experience, or to pass time.

It is beneficial to work. Whether you are working voluntarily or for pay, or you are working to support just yourself or others, working gives you a feeling of self-worth and self-confidence. By using your skills and helping others, you will feel good about yourself. It is also helpful to contribute financially to your family and gain independence by earning your own money. For example, if a woman is married with a family and her husband works, she may want to get a job to better her income. If a person is living with someone, each might want their own income.

Most of the time when a person goes to work it is because it is a necessity to do so. People need an income to live.

You can enjoy the job that you do by choosing a field that interests you. For example, if you like typing or computers you might want to work in an office. If you would rather clean houses, you might want a job cleaning someone's house. You will gain experience and self-confidence if you have a job that you like whether you are doing it to pass time or for the money.

I think that it is very important for a woman to get a job. Some women are single parents and need to work for the money. Other women work so that they do not have to depend on someone. Some women have no one to depend on and need to support themselves. Women can get jobs because they have good skills such as fashion designing, teaching, medical, etc. Today's society demands the skills of both men and women.

Questions

1. Why does Dolores feel it is important for people to work? Do you agree that it is important for people to work? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree that working gives someone self-confidence and self-worth? Why or why not?
3. Do you think women have special skills in the fields of fashion design, teaching or medicine? Do you think women are born with special skills in these areas?
4. Do you think there are or should be men's jobs and women's jobs? Which types of jobs do you think pay more?

No Pay For The Day

by Mary Ann Geller

My grandmother is a good example of someone who does work but doesn't get paid for it. It seems like she's always vacuuming her rugs, mopping her floors, dusting her furniture, changing her small rugs, cleaning her refrigerator and table, doing dishes, even changing the kitty litter. She feeds the cats on the street. Then, Monday through Friday she takes the little girl who lives behind her to school and then picks her up and doesn't get money for it. Then she pays her bills. She's either going to the electric company or the gas company. It seems like she does all this work and she doesn't get anything for it.

— The only work that I do and don't get paid for is cleaning my room - mopping the floor, sweeping the room, dusting the furniture, fixing the bed. It doesn't take much time.

Working without getting paid for it is the hardest kind of work. It's even harder if you have a full or part-time job and then come home to more work. In my opinion, it's even worse if you have children. It seems to me that there is more work that a person has to do which she doesn't get paid for than on paying jobs.

QUESTIONS

1. What jobs does the author's grandmother do without pay?
2. Do you think the grandmother likes what she does?
3. What kind of job might the grandmother like to be paid to do? Why?
4. Do you agree with the author working without getting paid for it is the hardest kind of work? Why or why not?
5. Why does the author say that is harder if you work outside the home and then come home to children? Can children help around the house?

MY DREAMS

by Darlene

My dreams are to learn a construction trade such as carpentry, plumbing, electricity, painting, bricklaying, etc. I would like to be my own boss.

Construction work pays well and it's what I like to do. I would like to do a good job putting down pipes that don't leak, painting without spilling on the floor or the windows, putting electrical wires in the right place. I don't want to do a bad job where the paint is all over the place, the electrical wires are wrong, the pipes are leaking all over and the building is lopsided.

I want to have my own business cards. I would work for people who like my_work. I will not work if they underpay me. I want my price for the work that I do.

QUESTIONS

1. How would you prepare yourself for a job in the construction trades? Talk with some women working in the construction trades and ask them how they got their jobs and what training they had to have.
2. People who work in construction often work for someone else. Would you like to work for someone else in construction or for yourself? Why? Brainstorm the advantages and disadvantages of each.

FRANCES SWENSON 8

A bungalow in a lower middle-class neighborhood in the city. A widow, she lives with her grown son. "How would I describe myself? A happy-go-lucky middle-aged woman." (Laughs.)

She is a switchboard operator at a large motel frequented by conventioneers. She has had this job for three years, though she has been a telephone operator for at least fifteen.

"There are always five girls at the board. They can only take lunch one at a time. I'm fifty. The little one next to me is twenty. The one next to her is twenty. The other one's about forty. And the other one's about thirty-five. Oh, I love 'em and they love me. They think I'm a great old lady." (Laughs.)

"You have to have a nice smiling voice. You can't be angry or come in like you've been out the night before. (Laughs.) You always have to be pleasant - no matter how bad you feel."

I had one gentleman the other day and he wanted an outside call. I asked his name and room number, which we have to charge to his room. And he says, "What's it with you?" "I'm sorry, sir, this is our policy." And he gets a little hostile. But you just take it with a grain of salt and you just keep on working. Inside you and in your head you get mad. But you still have to be nice when the next call comes in. I'm not the type to get angry on the phone.

"First thing I do is get my headset on, and I sit down at the board to relieve the girl that's been working all night. This is a board that's twenty-four hours. It's the type of chair that a stenographer would sit on. Believe me, after eight hours, it's not a comfortable chair. (Laughs.) We are constantly kept busy. There isn't an idle moment. There's not much time to converse. I have worked in different offices and you can't even take the chance to pick up a crochet hook, to keep your fingers busy. Not here.

"I worked 125 hours last two weeks. We asked the boss why we didn't get time and a half overtime. He says, "Well, the girls at the front desk get it, I don't see why you don't. You'll get it starting the first of the month." We were informed today we were going to get it. The one that told us okayed it, but there are two higher in the hotel than he.

"At one time, they tried to bring the union in, but two girls voted it down and then they decided to quit. But it has to be. Because I lost my weekend. I was invited to a cookout and I didn't go. They needed me, so I figured okay, I'll go, they need me. But I lost out on a little fun.

"It's the tension you're under while you're sitting there working. At one time Illinois Bell had a rest home. Years ago, when the switchboard operators became tense, overwrought, they sent them there. They had nervous breakdowns. They don't have it now because I think things have gotten easier.

"I had to have plumbing done in the backyard here. I asked a girl to switch shifts with me so I wouldn't keep them hanging that they couldn't get a girl to come in. I said if you can work my trick, I'll work yours. Where the other girls, they'd say, 'I'm staying home tomorrow.'

"Anybody that has done switchboard likes switchboard. It's not lonesome. You're talking to people. You ask another switchboard operator, they like it.

"But I feel they need us badly. They need us to be polite and they need us to be nice. You cannot have a business and have a bad switchboard operator. We are the hub of the hotel.

"And we don't get respect. We don't get it from the bosses or the guests. Although they are nice to us. But if they knew how hard we worked. Today communications is a big thing. So much business is over the phone. I really think we demand a little more respect."

"We sit there and we joke, 'Wouldn't it be great if we could just take this handful of plugs and just yank 'em?" (Laughs.) We think of it, we think of it. Like I said, you get so tense...If we could just pull 'em. (Laughs.) Disconnect them and see what happens. You accidentally disconnect somebody, which happens quite often. You don't do it on purpose, although there are times when you feel you'd like to do it."

QUESTIONS

1. List the things Frances likes and dislikes about her job.
2. What qualities would someone need to like a job as a switchboard operator? What kind of person would like that type of job?
3. Have you ever had a job you didn't like? Why?
4. What kind of job fits your personality? Would you like a job dealing with people or working alone? Do you enjoy being active or sitting down?

WRITING

Describe the type of job which fits your personality.

SHARON ATKINS 9

A receptionist at a large business establishment in the Midwest. She is twenty-four. Her husband is a student. "I was out of college, an English Lit. major. I looked around for copywriting jobs. The people they wanted had majored in journalism. Okay, the first myth that blew up in my faceis that a college education will get you a job."

"I changed my opinion of receptionists because now I'm one. I wasn't the dumb broad at the front desk who took telephone messages. She had to be something else because I thought I was something else. I was fine until there was a press party. We were having a fairly intelligent conversation. Then they asked me what I did. When I told them, they turned around to find other people with name tags. I wasn't worth bothering with. I wasn't being rejected because of what I had said or the way I talked, but simply because of my function. After that, I tried to make up other names for what I did - communications control – servomechanism. (Laughs.)

"I don't think they'd ever hire a male receptionist. They'd have to pay him more for one thing. You can't pay someone who does what I do very much. It isn't economically feasible. (Laughs.) You're there just to filter people and filter telephone calls. You're there just to handle the equipment. You're treated like a piece of equipment, like the telephone.

"You come in at nine, you open the door, you look at the piece of machinery, you plug in the headpiece. That's how my day begins. You tremble when you hear the first ring. After that, it's sort of downhill - unless there's somebody on the phone who is either kind or nasty. The rest of the people are just non, they don't exist. They're just voices. You answer calls, you connect them to others, and that's it.

"You try to fill up your time with trying to think about other things: what you're going to do on the weekend or about your family. You have to use your imagination. If you don't have a very good one and you bore easily, you're in trouble. Just to fill in time, I write real bad poetry or letters to myself and to other people and never mail them. The letters are fantasies, sort of rambling, how I feel, how depressed I am.

"The machine dictates. This crummy little machine with buttons on it - you've got to be there to answer it. You can walk away from it and pretend you don' t hear it, but it pulls you. You know you're not doing anything, not doing a hell of a lot for anyone. Your job doesn't mean anything. Because you're just a little machine. A monkey could do what I do. It's really unfair to ask someone to do that."

"Until recently I'd cry in the morning. I didn't want to get up. I'd dread Friday because Monday was always looming over me. Another five days ahead of me. There never seemed to be any end to it. Why am I doing this? Yet I dread looking for other jobs. I don't like filling out forms and taking typing tests. I remember on applications I'd put down, "I'd like to deal with the public." (Laughs.) Well, I don't want to deal with the public any more."

QUESTIONS

1. Why doesn't Sharon like her job?
2. Sharon has a job similar to Frances Swelters job in the previous essay. Why does Frances like her job while Sharon dislikes the same job?
3. What type of job might Sharon like?
4. Sharon thinks men would never be hired as receptionists because they would have to be paid more. Do you agree?

WAITRESSING

by Ruth Staab, Head Waitress

I was 16 years old, and my sister brought me in as a waitress. I was fired three times. My sister had worked at the restaurant for 12 years. The boss liked her; she was like a daughter to him. So he kept taking me back, because she asked him to. The boss was a good friend of mine, too. And he said I would never make it as a waitress. I was young and it was hard to pick up. But I finally got the knack of it. That was 31 years ago. From then on, I would close up for this man, and run the place. I was head waitress there, just like I am here.

I've worked here for 21 years. And I worked down the street for 7 years. So I've had a lot of customers for almost 20 years. A lot of customers give you a hard time. If you're not used to it, you think, "What did I do wrong?" You try to blame it on yourself. But it's really the customer.

You try to please everybody. But there are some people that you can't please, no matter what you do. You bend over backwards but you can't please them. Sometimes, customers aren't polite. They say "Give me." Like you have to drop everything and GIVE them.

A lot of people think of a waitress as being low-class. When you're a waitress, they think you're trash. I know I am as good as any profession.

I don't think I'll ever quit. I say it. I get disgusted, and I scream. But I always wind up smoothing things over. Everyone has bad days. Getting along, that's the main thing. A lot of places, you hear of girls being catty, and it doesn't go. Here, people stick together. It's more like home. I like it, and I know the girls like it. If they didn't they would quit.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Ruth likes her job as a waitress? Why or why not?
2. List the advantages and disadvantages of being a waitress.
3. What kind of person might like a job waitressing?

TWICE AS GOOD A JOB

by Noagie Seibert, Painting Contractor

I grew up a tomboy, so I always used tools and I always did things that were physically hard. So, to me, it was natural to do this kind of work. Some women grow up working. And I find that those women make good partners.

I trained one woman to paint. She's a painter and a contractor on her own now. I have a lot of respect for her because she's so good. She still works with me once in a while and sometimes, I work for her. It's true that you have to do twice as good a job when you're a woman.

For instance, I hurt my back recently. I wasn't supposed to lift anything. When I got two five-gallon cans of paint at the paint store, I really wanted to ask for help carrying it, but I didn't. I felt funny asking my helpers to lift for me. If I wasn't a woman, I wouldn't have thought anything of it. But, as a woman, I feel that I have to prove myself.

Questions

1. Do you agree with the author that women need to "do twice as good a job" as men do? Explain your answer.
2. What qualities would someone need to enjoy a job as a painter?
3. Many painters start their own businesses instead of working for an employer. What are the advantages and disadvantages of owning your own business?

PROVING HERSELF

When I started on the job, they were renovating the YWCA. My first week there, the first thing the foreman told me to do was to rub the paint off the cement floors with a little cinder block rubbing stone. Nobody does that.

He gave me this cock and bull story about how they were going to lay new floors in the bathrooms, and the bare floors would make a better bond. It was busy work. There I was, in the basement of the Y; it was hot; and I was down there on my hands and knees, rubbing the paint off the cement floor with a rubbing stone. There were seven bathrooms. I did that for two working weeks.

Months later, one of the carpenters told me he never thought I was going to make it. He was sure I was going to refuse to do such a back-breaking, idiotic job.

Questions

1. Why did the foreman ask this woman to rub paint off the cement floor?
2. What would you have done if you were asked to do "such a back-breaking, idiotic job?" Do you think the author did the right thing?
3. Have you ever felt discriminated against on the job because you were a woman?

Chapter 4
Obtaining Employment
or
Entering a Training Program

Chapter 4
Obtaining Employment or Entering a Training Program

Choosing Between a Job and Training Program

When considering employment opportunities, people often choose a job for immediate income and never consider the option of a training program. For many people, however, training programs may be a better choice than immediately entering the job market.

If you are considering a job over a training program, assess your marketable skills and consider whether you can earn enough to support your family on the skills you presently possess. The following math exercises may help you decide.

Exercise 1
Can You Afford This Job?

Ruth is considering entering a training program because she's not making much money at her job at a fast food restaurant. Do the following math problems to decide whether she can afford to keep this job.

1. Ruth makes minimum wage, $3.70 an hour and works 40 hours a week. What is her gross weekly pay? (Gross pay is the full amount before taxes are deducted.)
2. What is Ruth's monthly pay?
3. Federal income tax is 6%. How much federal tax is deducted from Ruth's check each month?
4. Social Security tax is 8%. How much Social Security tax is deducted from her check per month?
5. State income tax is 2%. How much state tax is deducted from Ruth's check per month?
6. Local tax is 5%. How much local tax is deducted from her paycheck each month?
7. Add 3, 4, 5, and 6 to find the total amount deducted from Ruth's paycheck per month.
8. What is Ruth's net monthly pay (take home pay)?

9. Ruth takes public transportation to work. A transpass costs $55. Deduct this from her net monthly pay. How much money does she have left?
10. Ruth has one child who needs childcare while she works. The childcare center charges her $50 per week. A) Calculate how much this is monthly, and B) deduct it from her monthly paycheck. How much money is Ruth left with per month? (Answers are at the bottom of this page.)

Do you think Ruth can afford this job? Would you be able to afford it? Think about your potential earnings and use the format above to calculate the amount you can earn per month and the amount of taxes and expenses.

If you are unable to make ends meet on the amount you can presently earn, investigate an occupational training programs which can provide increased skills and income. The next section includes more information about entering occupational training programs.

Writing

Congress has been discussing raising the minimum wage. Write a letter to your congressperson telling her/him your opinion of raising the minimum wage. What do you think a fair minimum wage would be?

Contact your local League of Women Voters to find out the name of your Senator and Representative. Discuss, in class, the difference between a Senator and Representative. How many Senators does each state have? How many Representatives? Draft a letter to your Senator or Representative telling her/him your opinion on the current minimum wage. Do you think it should be increased? Why? Review your letter. Is it in business letter format? If not, revise and then you can send it.

ANSWERS:

1) $148.00	2) $592.00	3) $ 35.52	4) $ 47.36
5) $ 11.84	6) $ 29.60	7) $121.32	8) $470.68
9) $415.68	10) $215.68		

Exercise 2
Information on Training Programs

Increased income is one of the many advantages of occupational training programs. Training programs often lead to jobs which are more interesting and challenging. Most government funded training programs are free to participants who are income eligible, and assist participants in finding jobs at the end of the program. Training programs often include on-the-job training at worksites to better prepare participants for their working environment. Some training programs offer information on workers' rights and assertiveness to help participants confront difficulties in the work world. There are many things to consider before choosing a training program. Remember, most programs continue for six months to a year and will lead to an occupation you will have for some time. Therefore, it pays to consider the program carefully.

First, decide whether the training will give you a job which you will enjoy. Interview someone who has the type of job in which you're interested and consider whether you might like that type of work. Ask about the working conditions, salary, benefits, hours or shifts, and the employment outlook. After getting information, consider whether this job suits you, your personality, and your lifestyle. (The Explore a Job exercise on page 52 provides a framework for the interview.)

For instance, someone investigating a construction job will find it necessitates being comfortable with heights. For someone afraid of heights, a construction job might be impossible. A career in word processing involves sitting and typing at a terminal for long periods of time. For someone who enjoys close, detailed work, this job may be perfect. Conversely, someone who likes lots of exercise and movement may dislike word processing for this reason. Finding a good match between personality and the demands of the job is an important part of succeeding in your new job.

After making sure the job will interest you, evaluate the training program to insure it meets your needs. Check with the training provider to see whether the hours of the training can fit into your schedule. Determine if you can revise your schedule to fit the hours of the training program. For instance, if the training programs ends at 4:00 pm and you have school age children consider how you can arrange for childcare for your children until you return home. Some training providers may provide childcare for younger children. Make sure that you can afford the transportation you will need to go to and from the training. Some programs provide stipends to help with transportation. Check with the provider to see whether the program in which you're interested offers stipends. Ask the provider what services they offer to help you find employment at the end of training and what the placement rate has been for graduates of the program.

When looking for employment training programs, be very careful about programs which sound too good to be true. They probably are. If you see an ad on the TV or on the subway saying you can learn to be an executive secretary or a fashion designer in six weeks, the school is probably a proprietary school which offers training which is often inadequate and requires participants to sign for an educational loan. Be wary if you are asked to take out a loan for anything.

There are many state or federally funded employment training programs. For information on upcoming trainings call the local Private Industry Council in your area. Community colleges, universities, programs which offer GED training, and area hospitals or unions may also offer or have information about employment training.

Finding Jobs [1]

The following activities will aid in locating jobs in your community.

Activity I.

When planning a job search, many people think newspaper help wanted ads are the only resource. There are, however, countless ways to find jobs.

Divide into groups of three or four and appoint a secretary to take notes during this activity. Discuss all the ways you have ever heard of anyone getting a job. Brainstorm as many methods as your group can think of. Share the list with the class. Discuss the ideas and make a list of three new ways to find a job.

Activity II.

Materials needed: Large sheets of paper
Magic Markers
Local street map

Divide into groups of three or four. Choose a four block area in a local business district to research for jobs. Draw a map of the area and fill in all the businesses in that area. Your group may want to take a walking tour of the area to include businesses you had forgotten.

Next, consult the map and list all the jobs which may be found in each business in that area. Consider which businesses you would like to investigate for job openings.

Exercise 3
Interviewing

Interviews are an important part of the screening process for both employers and employment training programs. An interview provides an opportunity for the employer to get a sense of the applicant and to assess whether they feel the applicant will be able to perform well on the job. The interview also provides an opportunity for the applicant to ask any questions they might have and assess whether they will feel comfortable with the job, the supervisor, and co-workers.

These are the qualities employers feel are most important in job applicants:

Experience
Responsibility
Dependability
Punctuality
A neat and correctly spelled resume, job application or cover letter
Willingness to learn
Eye contact
Appropriate appearance (dressed appropriately for that work environment)
Positive attitude
Humor
Confidence
Good communications skills
Ability to keep personal problems separate from the workplace
Activity
Willingness to work out disagreements with co-workers or supervisors

Divide into groups of two and discuss how to show an employer during an interview that you possess the above qualities. For instance, how would you act during an interview to show an employer you are dependable, responsible, and have a positive attitude? Make a list of the things you might do or say during an interview to portray these qualities.

Next, role play an interview with one person acting as the applicant and the other as the interviewer. When you are finished, ask the interviewer to assess you on the qualities listed above. Then, change roles.

Test Taking

Many jobs and training programs require tests. Tests examine several different skills. They evaluate your ability to handle stress, your understanding of the material involved, and your skill at guessing answers. In order to perform well on tests, you must first be able to control the stress and anxiety that you feel when you are taking a test. One way to control your anxiety is to learn relaxation techniques and practice them before you take the test and then to remember to practice them when you are sitting with the test in front of you. One relaxation exercise that works is to sit quietly, close your eyes and take three deep breathes, breathing in slowly for a count of five and then breathing out for a count of five. While you are doing this imagine yourself in a favorite place either on a beach, or in the mountains, or in the park or sitting quietly at home. Then open your eyes and begin the test. Another relaxation technique is to close your eyes and imagine yourself in a quiet place, sitting down and watching clouds float by for a few seconds. The you open your eyes and being the test. These simple techniques help to focus your attention and to relax you.

It is also important to relax before you enter the testing center or room. Make sure you get enough sleep the night before you take a test. Last minute studying often makes you more nervous and does not improve your score. Drinking, using drugs, having coffee the night before a test will also increase your nervousness and decrease your score. Eat something before you start the test and give yourself plenty of time to find the testing center.

Once you arrive at the testing center, practice the relaxation techniques and start the test. Focus on the questions on the test, not on the comments that float through your brain, particularly those that are negative.

Tests also examine your test taking skills and how well you guess. Most tests start with the easy questions and the questions become more difficult as you progress through the test.

When you begin a test, answer the questions which are easy for you first (these will probably be the questions at the beginning). Then answer as many difficult questions as you can. Do not stop and stare at questions you can't answer. Go on to the next question and try to answer it. After you have looked at every question and answered all the questions which are easy for you, go back to the questions you skipped because they were hard and answer those questions. On most tests, it is better to guess than to leave a blank. If it is not better to guess then the instructions will warn you not to guess. If there is no such warning, guess and don't leave any blanks.

When you are guessing, try to eliminate those choices which do not make sense and select between the most likely answers. In most multiple choice tests there will be four choices. Two of these choices will be impossible or extremely unlikely, one will be possible, and one will be correct. If you can eliminate two choices as impossible, you have a 50% chance of answering correctly. In most math tests, the choices will involve variations on the correct answer. For example, if the correct answer is 53.2, the choices will probably include 532, 5.32, 325 and 53.2.

You need also to find out in advance the type of test you will be taking. You need to know if it will be a multiple choice test, an essay test or a fill-in the blank test so that you will know how to prepare for the test. You also need to know what material will be on the test. Will it be a math test, a reading test, an editing test? Knowing this in advance will help focus your preparation.

Tests also examine the skills required for the job or the program. You need to prepare for this part of the test by reading a textbook, taking a course, or reviewing the information which is required. This preparation needs to occur at least several days before the exam in a systematic fashion. You need to work several hours each day for several days reviewing or studying for a test even if you feel you know the material. If you do this you will not panic the night before and try to memorize an entire book.

If you are taking a reading test, there are four basic kinds of questions: detail, main idea, inference and application questions. Detail questions ask about a specific piece of information which can be found within the paragraph. Main idea questions ask for the main idea, the title or the underlying theme in the writing. An inference question asks the reader to draw a conclusion. An application question asks the reader to apply the knowledge to another situation. It is useful for the reader to identify the type of question being asked before answering.

Practice reading some paragraphs before the test, and identify the types of questions being asked. Also practice eliminating choices that don't make sense.

Volunteer Work

By Barbara Meeks

Volunteer work is not a cash paying job. It's something that one does to help or for service or because he or she wants to. Volunteering is work because a person usually puts in at least four hours or more a day being involved. You do work such as helping in hospitals, schools, libraries, etc. Usually you do some of the basic things needed. For example, in hospitals you may write a letter for someone who is too ill to write or whose hand is injured. In schools, the child may have to leave early for an emergency and the parent or guardian may not be able to pick up the child. Then, you take the child to the home of the parent or guardian. In libraries you may help by replacing books in bins.

I like volunteer work. I have received a few awards for volunteer service. I have awards from Manna Head Start, and from a neighborhood center for parent involvement and community service.

Unpaid work is very positive for the family and the community. It gives a positive approach to the family and holds the family together. You learn about different programs for teens, drugs, service and help. It also makes the people in the community recognize you when there is a problem. You feel responsible and can give information to help.

Volunteer work keeps me from sitting around doing nothing, being very bored and having low self-esteem. It takes away the negativeness.

So when you are out there doing something positive, you feel it yourself and others see it and it keeps you going.

Questions

1. Why does the author recommend volunteering?
2. How would volunteering help you get a job?
3. Volunteering can be an immediate step to a long term job goal. Where could you volunteer to help you reach <u>your</u> goal?

Working

By Irene Terrea

I dropped out of high school because I wanted to get a job and have money of my own. I didn't want to have to ask my father for money because he was always broke. I decided the best thing to do was to get a job and have my own money.

So, the first thing I did after I made this decision was to go out job hunting. I went looking for a job with my girlfriend. We filled out lots of applications that had lots of questions. After we filled out the applications we would give them to the secretary in the office. She would tell us that she would call us and let me and my friend know if we got the job. We still went looking for other jobs just in case she didn't call us.

In all the job interviews they asked if I had any experience or they told me that I was too young. It took a month for me to get my first job. I remember the boss of the company because he interviewed me for the job. I was SO nervous! But, I got the job!

My first pay was eighty dollars ($80). I worked at this job for nine years . The people there were very nice to me. I learned a lot there. I learned trimming, making boxes, sewing spooling lace, and the duties of a foreman. I didn't like being a foreman at all, but I got more money along with more responsibility.

Now, I am going back to school for my GED. After I get it I will work again, but this time it will be better and I will be able to get a better job this time because I will be a high school graduate!

Questions

1. List the things the author did to find a job.
2. Do you think that it helps to look for a job with a friend? Why or why not?
3. The author says she was nervous before her interview. What are some things which might help you relax before an interview?
4. Irene was promoted to foreman. How did she get this promotion? What are ways you think people get promotions?
5. Do you think that it is discrimination if you are denied a job because you are "too young"? What can you do if you think that you are being discriminated against because of your age?

My First Job

by Dolores DeMar

My very first job ever was working at McDonalds Restaurant. I was seventeen years old at the time. I began working in the summer. I continued working for the next eight months. My experience there was nice. I never got bored with my work because our jobs varied. I went from cleaning tables to being a cashier. I also did other jobs in between such as cleaning outside the restaurant, making drinks and helping to cook the food.

I had a girlfriend that had gotten a job there prior to me and she suggested that I apply for a job. Another girlfriend of mine applied for the job also. We all worked there but we were on different shifts. My shift started around lunch time until past dinner time. The next shift I had was from breakfast time until dinner time. This seemed a little bit more difficult at first since I had worked a lunch shift for about the first five months. Nevertheless, I had fun working these too. I met lots of people, spent time with my friends, and learned things. The managers were friendly and non-discriminatory.

As the school year started, they began cutting back my hours. Even though I quit school, I couldn't seem to get more hours. I left the job and got married. I did not work again until after my children were born.

Questions

1. a) List the characteristics Dolores liked about her first job.
   b) Make a list of characteristics you feel are important in a job.
2. How did Dolores find out about this job?
3. What are other ways to find out about job openings?
4. Why do you think Dolores couldn't get more hours?

My Work Experience

by Mercedes Wulf

When I went on my first job interview, I was very scared and nervous. I was only thinking about the bad things that could happen. I said I wasn't good enough for the job and that I wasn't going to get it, and that even going on the interview was a waste of time. I didn't think I would get the job. But when they called my name, I went into the office and had the interview. I thought the questions would be hard to answer but they weren't. They asked me my name, address, social security number and a few other things, then they said they would call me. I waited for the call for 2 days. They called me in 2 days and told me I had the job. I was so happy I went out and celebrated!

In March of 1987 I went to work, I was scared but I went. I thought I was going to mess things up but I got the hang of it and I was good on the machine. They told me I did a good job, I was so happy it worked out.

I stayed on the job for a year and I liked it, but then there was a fire and I had to stop working there.

Don't ever give up looking for another job because there are lots of jobs out there for you. Right now I am in school at the Women's Program and now I have confidence in myself. I know if I want to I can get anything in life I want - if I work hard enough for it.

Questions

1. What questions have you been asked during an interview?
2. How can you prepare for an interview?
3. How should you dress for an interview?
4. What are qualities an employer looks for in a job candidate?
5. Does a positive attitude help in finding a job? How?

I'm Glad I'm Working

by Mary Eller

Things were bad for me in 1979. My husband quit his job with SEPTA. He worked for SEPTA for ten years. A week after he quit he went to school to learn how to drive a tractor-trailer in another state. He was there for a couple of months. After he learned how to drive the tractor-trailer, he stayed with that company for a while. He wasn't making good money doing that because he had to pay for the insurance on the truck and fuel. He quit working for the trucking company. Things got worse, he wouldn't look for work or do anything else. I had to look for a job to provide for my children.

My first stop was Woolworth's. I stopped there to see my old boss and to see if they were hiring. Mr. Davis hired me the very next day as a waitress. I worked there for 2 years but I wasn't happy. I got another job at the Cookie Factory. I was there for one year and then I was laid off. Business was very slow, I was out of work for a while.

Now I am working for an office cleaning company. When I started working for them I had to go to different office buildings whereever they needed me. Now I am assigned to one building. I have been with them for over 6 months now. I am cleaning the 11th floor of 841 Chestnut Street where the SEPTA offices are located. They have 30 people to clean the offices and rest rooms.

I like this job because they have good benefits. Some of the benefits I get are:

Health Insurance for me and my family
Four personal days
All legal holidays

I enjoy the work and the hours. I also enjoy the people I work with. Since I am in school trying to get my GED, this job allows me time to go to school and I have time to study and do my homework, too.

Questions

1. The author's husband attended a trade school to learn to drive a tractor trailer, but couldn't make enough money at his work. How can you find out if a school or training program will get you a job when you finish?
2. Do you know anyone who went to a training program and did not get a job? What did they do?
3. Why does Mary like her current job? What benefits does she get?
4. What are the different kinds of benefits you can get from an employer?
5. Would you take a job with "good" benefits instead of a job with a higher salary? Why or why not?
6. What benefits are important to look for in a job?
7. Do employers have to give benefits?

Office Work

by Denise McNeil

In the next couple of months I hope to be working in an office. I'd really like to work for a law firm or an insurance company. I would expect my job to consist of the following things: typing, filing, answering phones.

I'd like to work with a good company that has good benefits such as: paid vacation, sick leave, leaves of absence, good medical and dental benefits. These types of benefits are important to me because I have a daughter. I'd like to have one more child and would like for my children as well as myself to have these things. You never know who might get sick and the cost of medical care can be very expensive. I hope not to be working just to pay medical bills.

Questions

1. Where can Denise go to learn the skills necessary to become an office worker? Do you have to pay money to learn these skills?
2. What qualities does Denise feel are important in a job?
3. What questions should Denise ask about the job during the interview?
4. List ways Denise can find a job as an office worker.

Unions 2

At this factory the workers are all in unions. With a union, we have a rate increase every six months. I know that if I go to the hospital I'll be taken care of pretty well.

I used to work at a plastics factory. There, it was minimum wage. No union. You stay at one rate. There was no hospital coverage at all. I noticed a change in myself then. I was very irritable. We got no breaks. A half hour for lunch was all. By law, now, they say, every three hours, you get a fifteen minute break. But not many places follow it.

Here (at B&B Dye Works) we get a break. It's more relaxed. You can walk away from your table to talk to somebody for five minutes. You don't find that in many factories. At this factory we have safety features. In our tape machine, the razors are all covered. On the sewing machines, the needles are covered. You're not going to run a needle through your finger. They don't have boxes laying all around. So you won't fall or anything. We have a guy going through all day, sweeping the floors, and picking stuff up. There are stickers on the floors, and plastic bags. You can slip on a plastic bag.

At the plastics factory, where I worked, there were all these bits of plastic all over the floor. You could slide on that. They didn't care. We just had to watch where we were walking.

Questions

1. What does the author like about the job she has now?
2. How could someone find out what a job is like during an interview?
3. What could workers do if working conditions were unsafe?

Being Aware of Job Barriers

by Judy Linder

There are many different barriers in the work place today. Some people do not like to hire people because they have prejudices. Some examples are the person's race, religion or sex.

Some people do not like to hire women who have small children. They feel that there would be job interferences. An example would be if the child became ill and the mother had to leave her job to take care of the child. Some men feel that a woman's place is at home with the children. They do not realize that some men leave their families without any means of support and the mother has to find some means of support to provide for her family.

Sometimes a person goes to college to obtain a degree. Sometimes they apply for a job and are told they are overqualified for the position. There are people who will not hire a person because of their race. An example is the person may not like White, Black, or Hispanic people because of the way he or she was raised as a child.

There are also people who will not hire a person because they have different religious beliefs. There are people that forget we are all God's children, no matter what God we believe in.

This just goes to prove that there are all different types of barriers for different people. You could have a degree from college and a person may not hire you because of your race, religion, or sex. Just remember to be aware of these prejudices when you are applying for a job. There are a lot of people who are willing to hire a person because they are qualified. If you are aware of some of the obstacles in your path you can at least be prepared.

Questions

1. List the job barriers the author mentions.
2. Do you think most employers hire or want to hire "their own kind" or do they want to hire the best qualified person for the position?
3. Have you ever felt discriminated against when you applied for a job?
4. Does it help to know that some employers discriminate against applicants because of their race, religion or marital status? How could this knowledge help the job applicant?

A Good Paying Job

by Barbara Meeks

Barriers that would prevent me from getting a good paying job would be lack of education, lack of qualifications, lack of credentials, race and sex.

I would like to achieve better credentials, and be better qualified for a good paying job without race and sex being a barrier.

Companies and agencies will sometimes hire a female quicker than a male. Females are known to be stronger than males. Females more easily adapt to a situation and are more willing to work their way up slowly while a male moves quicker, expresses their ideas sooner and show their power faster. Top executives fear black males because their ideas are strong and powerful and are expressed sooner.

It is also easier to manipulate women because they are the breadwinners. They need the money to support their families. Women will also accept lower positions and less money just to get a job and be independent.

Males will not take a position if the salary is not high enough or if they are offered a lower position. They will hold out for the right job that utilizes their skills and pays a decent salary.

With all the race and sex barriers in the work world, women have come a long way. I, as a black female, want to add my name to the list. I know I will have to prepare myself very well for the professional person I want to be.

Questions

1. What barriers does Barbara feel will prevent her from getting a good job?
2. Why does she feel companies will hire women rather than men?
3. This essay expresses many opinions. Discuss in class whether you agree or disagree with the following opinions. "Women are stronger than men," Women are more willing to work their way up slowly," "Top executives fear black men", "Women are the bread winner". Discuss why you agree or disagree.

Barriers to Getting a Job

by Denise, Louise, Valerie, and Dolores

We, as women, feel that there are many barriers when it comes to getting a job. We have all experienced these barriers at one time or another. Some barriers are only temporary such as not having a high school diploma and some prevent us from getting a job that we want.

For women sex can be a barrier because one might not want you to have a certain job thinking that you are not capable of handling it. On the other hand, someone might want to hire you and then take advantage of you. This could cause you to not get a job or lose the one that you have.

Age is also a barrier. Some jobs do not want younger women because they feel that they lack experience. Others do not want older women because employers might feel that they are not as attractive or lack the ability to perform as well as younger women. Many women have experienced discrimination because of their race. Some employers stereotype their prospective employees because of their color or nationality. They feel that a certain race or nationality is less intelligent or less capable than another. This is far from being true so it is unfair to judge someone by their race or nationality.

Sometimes religion is judged in the same way. Another reason is that an employer might feel that the days off work for religious holidays will interfere with your job. Some won't hire you at all simply because they don't like your religion.

Women with children usually have the barrier of childcare, it is hard to find someone who is dependable as well as trustworthy to sit for their children. If your job is finished at 5:00 and your child leaves school at 3:00, this is a difficult problem to solve. This is a barrier for many women and especially single mothers. You would like to be able to get a job that won't fire you if you miss a few days because your child is sick or some other urgent reason. Being a mother creates difficulties when it comes to getting a job.

Being underqualified for a job as well as being over-qualified for a certain job is a barrier. If one is underqualified it is because she or he lacks a certain amount of knowledge or experience for the job. How can you get the job if they won't allow you to get experience? On the other hand, an employer might not want to hire an over-qualified person because she or he might not maintain that position of work.

Having an education and enough skills is very important. You can't get a good job that you want without it most of the time. Anyone who does not at least have a high school diploma has experienced this barrier.

Some jobs want you to be available when they need you there such as overtime or holidays. This is especially hard if you have children.

Some jobs require that you have certain things such as a friendly personality or own a vehicle. Another barrier is not being able to get the kind of benefits that you would like such as dental and medical care for you and your family. This is especially important to someone who is supporting their family with one income.

You must realize that there are many barriers when you look for a job. You must carefully think about somethings beforehand. The only thing that you can do is to try to improve your situation by bettering your skills and education and try to get a job that you are comfortable with.

Questions

1. Work in groups of 3 or 4 to make a list of all the job barriers these writers mentioned.
2. Which job barriers can an applicant change? Which cannot be changed? (For instance, an applicant cannot change her sex, but she can get a high school diploma).
3. How could a job applicant remove the barriers that can change?
4. Do you think there are more or less barriers for women trying to find a job than there were 20 years ago?

CHAPTER 5
ON THE JOB

CHAPTER 5
On the Job

Exercise 1
Communications Skills

If you have been employed, you have probably encountered some problems with your co-workers or supervisors. In the world of work, like any other community, disagreements and problems are inevitable. Effective communication skills, however, can help to solve problems. Assertiveness, communicating your needs clearly while not infringing on the rights of others, is an important communication skills. This exercise will help you observe how you communicate at work and elsewhere and consider whether you communicate in an assertive manner.

Circle the response which is closest to what you would actually do in the following situations. Be honest!

1. You have been friends with your next door neighbor for some time. Lately, however, she seems to be asking for favors all the time. Today, she asks whether you will babysit her son, Billy, while she does her shopping. You've just returned from your clerical training class and have about two hours of homework to do. You respond by:

a. Telling her that you have too much to do and hate sitting for Billy because he's such a brat. You end up feeling guilty for being so harsh.
b. Reluctantly tell her you'll sit for Billy but feel angry and taken advantage of.
c. Calmly tell her that you won't be able to sit today because you have too much homework to do.

2. You have invited your friend and her husband over for dinner. It's now about 12:30 in the morning and they show no signs of leaving soon. You're concerned because you have a job interview at 9:00 tomorrow morning. You decide to:

a. Yawn a lot and hope they get the message.
b. Wait until 1:30 am to do anything. At that point, you're so frustrated you tell your friend angrily that it's time to leave.
c. Tell them that you've had a nice time, but it's been a long day and you've got an interview tomorrow morning, so they'll have to leave.

3. You get a call from a magazine salesperson who is very persuasive. You know you don't need any magazines and don't really have the money now. You respond by:

a. Submitting to the sales pitch and buying five subscriptions you really don't need.
b. Yell that he doesn't have any right to interrupt your dinner with this silly phone call and slam down the phone.
c. Tell the caller that you really don't need any subscriptions right now.

4. You're working as a carpenter's helper and you're the only woman on the job site. For the past two weeks, the guys designate you to get the coffee every morning. You took this job to learn carpentry skills, not to get coffee. On Monday, you decide to:

a. Get the coffee while you mutter under your breath that men are just as capable of getting the coffee.
b. Tell the crew that you are sick and tired of this treatment and there is no way you are getting the coffee.
c. Say, "Why don't I buy the coffee today? Who'd like to get it?" and wait until someone else offers.

5. You're working as a nurse's aide. Your friend calls you at work and invites you to a concert which you've been trying for weeks to get tickets. You ask your boss for the time off, but he/she says no. You respond by:

a. Telling your boss you've had it with this job and you quit. You never liked it anyway and this is the last straw.
b. Working the day of the concert, but being in a awful mood. You spend most of the day grumbling that you never get to have any fun.
C. Asking your boss if you can have the day off if you can find a replacement and calling around to find someone who will take that night for you.

6. You have worked in the secretarial pool for about six months and are friendly with most of the other secretaries. One woman always comes to your desk to chat, even when you're very busy. You decide to:

a. Try to listen to her as you type, even though you're making lots of errors and are getting frustrated.
B. Say angrily, "I've heard enough about the party you had on Saturday night. Don't you have work to do?"
c. Tell her you really have too much work to chat right now, but you'd like to hear more about her party over lunch.

You can probably guess that C was the assertive response in each of those situations. If you chose another response, consider whether it was the most appropriate and effective response. The other responses were either aggressive or passive.

Assertiveness basically means standing up for your own rights without infringing on the rights of others. Assertive behavior involves knowing what one needs and wants, and stating those needs clearly and honestly. It usually ends in cooperation and compromise which reduces anxiety, misunderstandings and frustration.

Passive behavior involves avoiding conflict by giving into others' wishes. Usually, this ends in feeling angry, frustrated, resentful and taken advantage of.

Aggressiveness involves getting one's needs met at the expense of others and being hostile to the needs of others. Aggressive behavior usually reduces cooperation and understanding and frequently results in that person feeling guilty.

Exercise 2 [1]
Assertiveness Quiz

In the following exercise, check all the characteristics of assertive behavior and then discuss your choices with the class.

I- messages ("I want," "I feel," etc.)	_____
Little white lies	_____
A firm tone of voice	_____
A spontaneous expression of feelings	_____
Manipulation	_____
Implied threats	_____
Erect posture; good eye contact	_____
No put-downs	_____
Never saying no	_____
Unselfishly subordinating your needs to the needs of others	_____
Not feeling the need to make excuses	_____
Expecting that others will know what you want	_____
Taking responsibility for your own words and action	_____
Silent resistance	_____
Hoping that others will recognize when you are hurt, anxious, Worried, frustrated, or resentful	_____
Feeling guilty	_____
Going along with others until you explode with irritation	_____
Trying to compromise in a conflict	_____

What are some other characteristics you have noticed about assertive behavior?

Exercise 3
ROLE PLAYS ON CONFLICT SITUATIONS 2

ROLE-PLAY: Role-play the following conflict situations in groups of three. In each role play, two people participate in the role play while the third observes and records how the conflict was resolved. The student character must try to invent ways to resolve the conflict in an assertive manner. For more practice with assertive behavior, role play some of the situations from Exercise 1.

Situation 1: Lynn is a participant in an automotive technology employment training program. There is only one other woman in the program. The instructor and other participants are male. The instructor consistently excludes Lynn from class discussion by not acknowledging her when she tries to speak. He also denies her the opportunity to gain any hands on practice with specific tools and techniques. For instance, the instructor invites the men in the class to practice with tools and try different techniques during the lunch break but never invites Lynn or the other woman to practice. Roleplay a conversation between Lynn and her instructor.

Situation II: Sevalia has just started a job training program in computer-aided drafting. She has two small children. One is in the first grade and the other is a pre-schooler. Sevalia has arranged for her preschooler to attend a childcare center in her neighborhood. The first two weeks of the program were going well, however, this week her preschooler has been crying endlessly in the mornings, begging not to have to go to the center. Sevalia has been late three times this week because she has had a terrible time trying to get her child calmed down before she can take him to the center. Sevalia's instructor has just given her a warning about the lateness. Sevalia knows she has to do something before she is removed from the program for excessive lateness, but she doesn't know what to do. Roleplay the situation with Sevalia at the daycare center with her child.

Situation III: Elena has been enrolled in a medical records technology program for one month and so far things have been going smoothly. However, the other day her sister phoned and informed her she had to go in the hospital for an operation and needed Elena to care for her four small children while she was hospitalized and recuperating. Elena has always helped her family when asked, often to the point where she let her own needs go unattended. She's torn about what to do at this point because she doesn't want to let her sister down and yet knows that she can't possibly take care of her sister's four children and still continued in the training program. Roleplay a discussion between Elena and her sister.

Writing Assignment

Write about any conflicts you foresee occurring in your life when you enter a training program or conflicts you've had or might have with a co-worker or employer on the job.

Read the following stories and answer the questions after each.

My Work History

by Andrea Liberatore

When I was nineteen I worked at Tronus where they make ironing boards, pot holders and towels. I trimmed pot holders and wrote down how many were in each lot. Then I would stock each lot on the shelf.

I did not like standing on my feet all day. I asked the foreman if I could sit down for about an hour while I was trimming some towels because my legs really hurt and my back was bothering me. The foreman said too many people were complaining about being uncomfortable and he refused to let me sit down.

A few days later I saw two people sitting down and the foreman was right there. I think he had something going with those two women because he let them sit and made me stand on my feet for eight hours. I didn't say anything because if I had spoken my mind he probably would have fired me on the spot. I didn't say anything to him. The next day I quit.

Once I get my GED and graduate, I want to become a secretary and work for a lawyer's office. The skills I need are typing and shorthand. The reason I want to become a secretary is because I like working behind a desk and I like to type.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Angel dealt with this situation in the most effective way possible?
2. Could she have spoken up to the foreman without getting fired? How?
3. Role play a situation with Angel talking to her foreman. What is the most appropriate assertive way for Angel to deal with this situation and still keep her job?
4. Can you imagine a similar situation happening to Angel and her boss when she's a secretary? Roleplay this situation.
5. Have you ever complained to a supervisor about conditions on the job? What happened? If you could do it again, would you change the way you handled it?

All's Fair in Work and War

by Mary Ann Geller

I haven't had many jobs but a few of them were not what I expected. When I was about thirteen, I had a paper route. I had been working about eight months when I was short of cash for my bill and my new supervisor took the money from my salary. I felt that this was very unfair. I quit a few days later. Now, I realize that he didn't have any other choice, but it still angers me when I think about it.

A few years later I got a real job. About two months after I left school, I got a job as a nursing assistant. Everybody seemed friendly and I got along with my supervisor. The hardest part was standing in the cold or rain waiting for the bus, trolley and the train. After about a year and a half I began to feel like I was in a trap. They were Tarzan and I was Cheetah. They wanted more from me than I could give. I felt like a robot. I like a job where it's fifty/fifty and they would give me a sermon every time I wanted a day off. I'm human, not a robot working for their pleasure. Everyone was still friendly but I felt disgusted and quit.

After I left that job, I started working in a nursing home. The interviewer seemed friendly. The pay wasn't the greatest in the world but I needed a job so I took it. My friend interviewed with me and she was also hired. I worked the 3-11 shift. I had up to ten people I had to feed, shower and get ready for bed by 10:30 pm. My feet hurt so much they would scream and yell but I couldn't wear sneakers. I had to wear nurse's shoes. A few weeks after I started there was an inspection. They put me on a different floor. After the inspection they would write me up for stupid things. One night I had seventeen people to take care of. There were only two people on the wing. One of the patients had an accident and I cleaned it up the best I could, but it wasn't good enough and I was written up for it. A few days later I was fired. The funny part was that I was not fired for this incident but because I took my birthday off. We were told we had our birthdays off and my brother had given me tickets to the David Bowie concert for my birthday. When I told them I would be taking the day off, they said I had to wait three months before I could take a day off. I wasn't going to change my plans, so I was fired.

The job I have now is wonderful and everything is fifty/fifty. It's the perfect job and I love it. There is no unfairness or bossiness except that they are the bosses and do set the rules. There is nothing worse than being cheated or being used. Fifty/fifty is when they appreciate me and I consider their feelings. When I want a day off, I don't get a sermon and when I can't do a job they don't force me to do it. They make me feel like a person, not just an employee. They make me feel proud to be one of their workers. The hardest part is waiting for the trolley and train but this is the best job I've had.

Questions

1. What does Mary Ann mean when she says "I began to feel like I was in a trap. They were Tarzan and I was Cheetah"? Have you ever felt like that about a job? Why?
2. Do you think Mary Ann dealt with getting a day off in the most effective manner? How would you have handled it? Roleplay a situation in which Mary Ann tries to get the day off.
3. Would you rather quit or be fired from a job? Why? Do you receive different benefits if you quit than if you are fired?
4. Why does Mary Ann like her present job? What have you enjoyed about previous jobs?

Writing

Find out what the Department of Labor, and the Human Relations Commission, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or your local union do and how they can help you if you have been fired or been discriminated against. Write about it and share your information with the class.

Childcare

by Dolores DeMer

When my youngest child was about one and one-half years old I started to work as a waitress at the Northeast Diner. The only hours available were at night because they had steady waitresses during the day. I only worked there for a short time because I was having some health problems and some problems at home.

Shortly thereafter I became a single parent, living with my youngest child. My two older children were living with their father. I had several setbacks looking for a job. One of them was getting a dependable, trustworthy babysitter for my little girl. She started school but I couldn't find a way to have her brought from school to daycare if I worked between 9 and 5. Another problem was the fact that my two older children were living out of state with their father. They could not visit on weekends. They could only visit six weeks during the summer and then I would need a babysitter for three children all day long. I decided to go to school instead of working and get a high school diploma. Then I hope to get a good paying job.

Questions

1. What are some ideas you could suggest to Dolores to help her solve her babysitting problem? What are some solutions people in your family have found to this problem?
2. Will you need childcare when you begin work or a training program?
3. If you anticipate having childcare problems, would you tell the employer during an interview? Why or why not? If you were the interviewer, how would you feel about hiring someone who had difficulities with childcare?
4. Do you think the government should provide daycare for children? Why or why not? If so, how could you help make this happen?

Writing

Write a letter to the editor of your local paper or to your local congressperson or legislator stating your opinion on the need for childcare. Send the letter and share the response with the class.

Racism

by Valerie Clark

Once I worked in a factory packing fruit and vegetables. This was the first job I ever had. I went to this job with high hopes of doing very well. I went to work every day and on time. I got along with everyone but my supervisor. He didn't like me from the first day that he saw me. He was always discriminatory against Blacks. He told me to my face that he didn't like Black people, that he never did and never would. He told me that young Black girls needed to be home with their mothers. He made it very clear to me that he didn't like young people because he said they were too dumb to know anything. He said he didn't like Black people because they were always looking for a handout and that a woman couldn't do anything for him but shine his shoes. He would harass me on the job. He would find work for me to do even when it was my lunch time or my break time. He was always there with something to do.

This man made me feel like crawling under a rock and staying there. I couldn't understand why he was so unfair to me when I was trying my best to have him like me. I did try to talk with him to see if we could work the problem out but he told me that the only thing I could do was to quit. By this time I was very hurt with nowhere to turn. I didn't want to give up my job but I felt so alone and hurt and I knew I was being treated unfairly. I hated to come to work because I knew I would have to be around this man and listen to him talk to me anyway he wanted. Whenever he took a day off I was so happy because I knew I would have a good day at work and wouldn't have to go through the harassment and the name calling.

I was not the only black person on the job. But I was a woman - 5'6" and 100 lbs. There was a black man who weighed 350 lbs. and half of it was in his fists. The supervisor had enough sense not to mess with him.

At the time I was afraid to go to the boss. When I was at the breaking point, I went to the boss and told him my problem. I wished I would have gone to the boss much sooner. At the time I was a teenager and didn't know anything about discrimination, harassment, or the Better Business Bureau.

Questions

1. The author said her supervisor made her feel "like crawling under a rock." What did he do to make her feel this way?
2. Valerie was afraid to tell her supervisor's boss about the harassment. Why was she afraid? What could she have done to feel less afraid about telling him? How could her co-workers have helped her? Did they know? Should she have told them about her problem with the supervisor? Why or why not?
3. Valerie indicates that talking to the supervisor's boss was helpful in ending the harassment. What do you think she said? Role play this situation.
4. Have you ever been mistreated on a job because of race, sex, or age? What did you do?

Writing

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of color, religion, sex, national origin, or ancestry. Call the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to find out how to get help under this law. Write about how a worker can fight discrimination in the workplace.

The Labor Board

by Gina

I was working at Bayard Sales for two and a half years. Then I got pregnant. I left on maternity leave. The leave was for thirteen weeks before delivery and thirteen weeks after the baby's birth. In the contract it said you had twenty days after delivery to notify them as to when you were returning to work.

I had my son and went to the company ten days later to tell them I was returning on October 13, 1985. I talked to my boss's secretary because he was in a meeting. When I told her when I was returning, she said she would tell him that I had been there and the date I was returning.

The day before I was supposed to return to work, my boss called me and said that he had already filled my position because he didn't hear from me until after the 20 day notification period. My boss and I had an argument over the phone about this but there was nothing I could do at the time except collect the rest of my disability and then unemployment.

About a year later my friend and I were talking about jobs and I told her that I thought I had been treated unfairly. She asked me if I had gone to the Labor Board with my problem. I said no and asked what could they do to help. She said that the Labor Board is an agency that helps employees who have lost or are losing their jobs and help them get their jobs back if they have a valid case. After the conversation I thought about going but didn't because it was a year later and I thought it would be useless because the company would probably find another excuse for laying me off.

Now that I look back on this I feel that I had a good chance of getting my job back but I found another job and did not want to go back to a job where they did not really want me.

Questions

1. Do you think Gina was discriminated against because she had a baby? Why or why not?
2. Should Gina have filed a complaint against her boss? Why or why not?
3. What does the Labor Board do? Call and ask them if they could help in this situation. How long can someone wait to file a complaint?
4. Call the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and ask the same questions. Discuss which agency would be more helpful to Gina.

Unfair Wages

by Lorraine Seeley

I was working in a restaurant for $2 an hour but I had the tips for myself. It was the best job I could get at 18. One day my supervisor saw how many tips I was getting, so she told me I had to give her one-half of my tips. This was unfair because she was underpaying me and still wanted one-half of my tips. I was a good worker and felt I deserved a fair wage. I then went to the Department of Labor and filed a complaint. They made her give me four months back pay. The following week she gave an additional $5 in my pay and told me not to bother coming back.

The Department of Labor is supposed to help people. They did help me but I lost my job anyway.

Questions

1. Why did Lorraine go to the Department of Labor? What happened to her and why?
2. Have you ever filed a complaint against an employer? What happened? Was it worth filing the complaint?
3. Do you think the supervisor or a bus boy should share in a waitress's tips? Why or why not?
4. Lorraine said she was fired for filing a complaint with the Department of Labor. Why do you think she was fired? What would you have done after being fired?

Sexual Harassment

by Melonie Terry

I experienced sexual harassment on a job and discrimination against my right of freedom of speech on another job. I did not say anything to anyone because I didn't think anyone would believe me. I was very young when it happened and I felt that I would be blamed for the harassment or that at least I would have to prove my innocence.

There are some women who don't care what someone does to them as long as they get what they want so they go along with things. Others accept harassment because they need to hold onto their jobs and they feel society will blame them so they are afraid to mention it. There are so many reasons why women don't say anything. Some women feel they have committed a sin, but the sin is having to do something against your will in order to get the position you are trying to get.

There is help for harassment, now. You still have to prove your innocence but it's not as bad as it was before because people are talking about it on the radio, on TV and in the street. There really is no reason to hide unless you want to.

Questions

1. The author says, "There are many reasons why women don't say anything about sexual harassment". What are the reasons she states? Can you think of more reasons?
2. Write your own definition of sexual harassment. Read the definitions aloud. Does it mean the same to everyone in the class?
3. Have you ever experienced sexual harassment on the job? What did you do? Would you do anything differently now?
4. The law defines sexual harassment as "unwelcome sexual attention that interferes with one's ability to perform on the job". It can be verbal, physical, or environmental. Call the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to find out more about your rights under this law.

Writing

After calling the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, write about what you can do if your boss or co-workers are harassing you.

My Work Experience

by Ruth Wallace

When I was 16 years old I became a wife and a mother. I didn't know much about life, but I learned at a very young age. My son and I went through hard times with my son's father but we made it through together.

When I was 21 years old my son started school and I learned to bartend. I liked the money but some of the people were hard to put up with. The old drunks weren't bad, it was the young drunks I couldn't stand. The old drunks just held your hand and told you their problems. The young ones tried to grab and kiss you and would call you names if you didn't let them. But that was a long time ago and I was trying to survive and raise my son.

Now I am attending GED classes in the Women's Program so I can get my GED and a good job like other women. I would like to have the kind of job that I could go wearing nice clothes, have my hair fixed and wear make-up. The only problem with that kind of job is that those types of women just sit around all day and do nothing. I could not sit around doing nothing all day, I would go crazy. I have to keep busy because I get bored easily.

My goal is to be a nurse. We are in need of nurses. It takes a good education to become a nurse. I know I'm on the right track because I am back in school and I am working hard to reach my goal.

Questions

1. The law defines sexual harassment as "unwelcome sexual attention that interferes with one's ability to perform on the job. The attention can be verbal, physical, or environmental". Do you think Ruth was sexually harassed by the customers at the bar? Why or why not?
2. What would you do if customers tried to grab and kiss you? What would be most effective? Role play this situation.
3. Ruth wants a job in which she'll wear nice clothes. Do you think a receptionist or secretary who dresses well for work "just sits around all day?" If not, what do you think they do?
4. If Ruth's intermediate goal is to be a receptionist while she works toward her final goal of becoming a nurse, where do you think she might look for a job as a receptionist? Why?

Writing

Different jobs bore or excite different people. Write a list of the five most boring things that you have had to do. Write a list of the five most exciting or interesting things you have done. Now, list jobs that would involve the most boring things you have done and list the jobs that involve the most exciting things you have done. Decide which would be the one most interesting job for you.

Working with the Public

by Jeanette Schneider

I worked at Dunkin' Donuts at Aramingo and Tioga for three years. I really liked it. Everyone was nice. We all got along. I worked on the cash register, I finished the donuts, made cookies and trained new girls. I really liked it. I didn't get paid much, but it was a job. It made me feel important. People looked up to me, especially the new girls. I was always easy on them because I thought to myself, "I was new once, so I'll give them a chance to learn." I was very patient with them.

Dunkin' Donuts isn't that bad especially if you have a lot of friends there. Sometimes it is hard to work with the public, but it wasn't too hard for me. I got along very well with the customers, but my manager sometimes got on my nerves. My hours were supposed to be from noon to six. But by the time I got my drawer counted and the next shift drawers counted, it was 7:30. Not to mention that I had to walk home, and by the time I got home it was 8:00.

My customers looked at me and said, "I can't believe you do all this for so little money." I said to them, "It's a job." A lot of times my customers tried to put tips into my pocket, but I told them, "We can't do that. We split our tips with the other girls." They kept on telling me to take it, but I said it wasn't fair to the other girls. But they always gave me more, because around Christmas time they used to give me money in a card or a gift which was very nice of them.

There's one thing about working at Dunkin' Donuts. When you call out sick you have to get your own replacement which wasn't easy because you really didn't plan on getting sick. A lot of people called me and asked me to cover for them. I always said yes. I could never say no, and I thought I could use the extra money. But when I called people to cover for me, they wouldn't. So I thought to myself, "What goes around comes around." I know two wrongs don't make a right, but there were no hard feelings. They just didn't like my shift because it was bad timing for them.

Then two months later I found out I was pregnant. I told my manager I would work up to my eighth month, so they wouldn't have to get a replacement for me yet. But I couldn't lift the jelly pumps; they were too heavy for me. My manager asked if the bakers helped me, could I still finish the donuts? I said I could, so I still finished the donuts. Sometimes the bakers helped me and sometimes they didn't, so most of the time I was finishing the donuts by myself. I started getting pains in my stomach and I knew it was time to go back to the doctor. I did and he wanted me to get an ultrasound done as soon as possible. I was all upset. I didn't know what to think then. I had an ultrasound done and the doctor said everything was fine except I wasn't having one baby. I was having two! Now it was time to worry. I was shocked. I didn't know what to think. When I told everyone, no one believed me. I still couldn't believe it myself. The doctor told me he didn't want me working anymore. He said he didn't want me on my feet because I was a high risk pregnancy since I was

carrying two babies. So I told him I would quit my job in my fifth month. He said okay. I told my manager and everyone that I was going to leave earlier than expected. They all said I had to do what was best for the baby. I started to train a girl to do my job. She caught on very quick, sooner than I thought she would. So my manager said I could leave a week earlier if I wanted but I didn't. Before I left they threw me a little going away party which was very nice of them.

Questions

1. Jeanette says that she was patient when training new employees. Patience is one quality which makes co-workers or supervisors pleasant to work with. What are other qualities you would look for in co-workers or supervisors? How would you get a sense of these qualities in an interview. Which qualities do you have which make you a "good co-worker" or supervisor?
2. Jeanette worked until 7:30 pm when she was scheduled to work only until 6:00. Do you think she was paid for this time? What would you do if you were in her position? Roleplay discussing this with your employer.
3. Do you think it's fair to find your own replacement when you're sick? What would you do if you couldn't find a replacement?
4. Jeanette often couldn't get a co-worker to help her lift the jelly pumps. What would you do if a co-worker wouldn't help you with a task? Roleplay this situation.

Bake Rite Blues

by Arnetta Tindle

I work at Bake Rite which operates 24 hours a day. The problem is that the supervisors are very hyper and tense. They're very uncomfortable to work with because they're tense from all the pressure that their boss is giving them. The employees have to deal with their attitude which is not so easy because they already have been attacked. They lose many workers and new people come. Employees leave because the production is not organized.

One day, I was in the process of training another person to stack the crates. There was a damaged tray on the bottom that was not supposed to be put in the machine. Because of this damaged tray, the crates did not lock and two stacks of bread crates fell onto my neck and shoulder. I reported the injury.

My injury turned out to have really hurt me, so they wanted me tc go to the doctor. I went to the doctor who would not examine me without an injury report from the job. My supervisor did not want to give me one because he claimed I didn't need it. I told him, "I just came from your company doctor and he told me I need an injury report to get checked. Now, I need medical attention. I would appreciate you giving me a report before I go to the law." I did receive the report and got myself examined. It was a very bad injury that required surgery. To this day, my supervisor has a nasty attitude about it.

Questions

1. The author says there was a lot of tension in her job at Bake Rite. How have you dealt with stress on the job? Brainstorm all the ways you can think of.
2. Do you think bosses or workers experience more stress on the job? Why? What can make a job stressful?
3. Arnetta's boss didn't want to give her an injury report after she hurt her shoulder. Do you think she dealt with this situation effectively? Why or why not?
4. Worker's Compensation enables employees to obtain benefits if they have an injury which is caused or made worse by their job. You can call the EEOC to find out how to file for Worker's Compensation.

RACISM IN THE WORKPLACE

by Jackie Velasquez

I worked at a papercutting factory and I really tried to do my best on the job. But the boss seemed like she was never satisfied with me. She always picked on me and I know it was prejudice, because she would always make a smart remark about Hispanics. I got the message and tried to ignore her till I really got tired of it. I complained to the Big Boss about her and he talked to her, but she didn't stop. When I talked to the Big Boss, he didn't want me to quit. But I couldn't stay and get aggravated everytime I went to work. I hung on for awhile because I really needed the money. But then I got tired because I felt I was trying my best and this woman kept aggravating me.

I finally quit. I felt bad because I felt like a quitter even though I know I was doing good at the job. I couldn't be around someone who constantly kept pushing me around but I felt if I argued with her I'd lose my job and she would come out winning.

Now I feel if I got a job and went through the same experience I would say what I felt and make sure that person didn't take advantage of me.

Questions

1. Jackie says that if she experienced racial discrimination on the job today, she would speak her mind. What do you think she would say to her boss? Roleplay a situation of Jackie talking to her boss.
2. If Jackie's confrontation with her boss is unsuccessful, what is her next step?

Writing

Pretend you are Jackie's friend and write her a letter giving her advice about this situation. Use all the information you've learned in this chapter about workers' rights on the job, assertiveness, and communication.

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